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*Models and Projects
for English Composition*

B. C. DILTZ

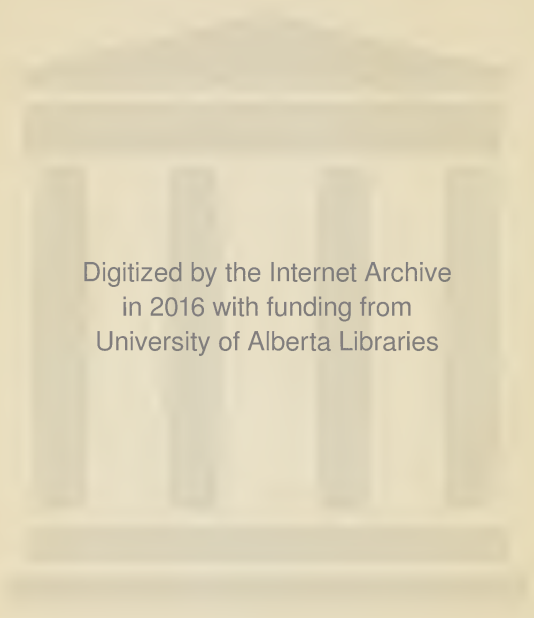


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MODELS AND PROJECTS
FOR ENGLISH COMPOSITION



Models and Projects for English Composition

By

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Toronto

CLARKE, IRWIN & COMPANY LIMITED

1932

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FOREWORD

The centipede was happy quite,
Until the toad for fun
Said, "Pray which leg comes after which?"
This worked her mind to such a pitch,
She lay distracted in a ditch,
Considering how to run. *Anon.*

THIS little jingle suggests a pit into which both teachers and students of English composition are likely to fall. Art for art's sake is an amusing phrase. Art is greatest when its burden is sublime. The first requisite of a writer is not a knowledge of his craft, but the assurance that he has something to say. The *CUE* to good writing is Coherence, Unity and Emphasis, but the cue leads to nothing when the would-be writer has no thought or feeling to express.

In writing this book five aims have been kept constantly in mind:

1. To make students think.
2. To provide an abundance of specimens of English prose upon which they may model their own attempts at writing, or form standards of critical judgment.
3. To supply them with practical and suggestive exercises.
4. To give instruction in the development of an individual style of writing.

5. To outline a progressive course in English composition for the senior grades in the secondary schools.

Good models are powerful stimulants to interest in composition, but their literary value to the student depends mainly on the judgment and initiative of the individual teacher. Throughout this book methods for the use of these models are suggested but not prescribed. The models may be used to advantage in many different ways. In one way or another, nearly all of them, during the past ten years, have been put to the acid test of the classroom. There, they have proved their worth.

Both models and exercises have been organized into groups for special work, but these groups may be rearranged easily and made to suit the needs of individual classes. Some exercises may produce the best results when done by Middle School students; other pieces of work are intended only for Upper School classes.

A few critics may contend that the material presented here is too far advanced for the students to whom it is addressed. As teachers many of us are prone to under-estimate the capacities and abilities of our students. It may be that we seek perfection in the practice of a few fundamental rules, without realizing that there is a limit to which the mechanics of composition can be taught with results that are economic and commendable. This book, on the other hand, aims to place the student in an environment in which he can grow. It is hoped that he will lose his self-consciousness in the companionship of maturer minds, and that he will forget himself in the

creation of prose that is interesting, natural and beautiful.

Many of the exercises throughout this book may be done orally, and class discussion, because of its informal and impromptu nature, can, when properly guided, be made the most valuable kind of oral composition for senior classes.

With very few exceptions, the assignments for written work require short compositions. The advantages of the short theme of about 250 words, or of one page of foolscap in length, are too numerous to make an argument respectable. One paragraph that is well and truly made, will return a greater profit to the writer than a whole essay in which he has merely sprawled his length.

In assembling this book so much material that belongs definitely to the Lower School, had to be rigorously excluded that, like the man who took his clock to pieces, I have still enough left to make another. The course as outlined here presupposes that in the Lower School the student has been taught certain elementary laws of composition; that he has been given instruction in English grammar, in how to construct and punctuate a sentence, and even in how to prepare a manuscript. His chief concern henceforth should be with thought and its efficient and effective expression.

To my students who have generously consented to the use of their essays, I wish to give formal acknowledgement. To Professor G. M. Jones, who so kindly read this work in manuscript and offered many valuable suggestions, I am grateful and still indebted. To all the authors and publishers who

have permitted the reprinting of the passages which provide the models for this text, I tender my sincere gratitude. Every effort has been made to trace the authorship of every selection, and in only a few cases has the search been fruitless. To these authors, with the hope of restitution, goes my present acknowledgment. My association in this work with the publishers, Mr. Clarke and Mr. Irwin, has proved their patience and courtesy. Their encouragement and material assistance identify them personally with this work.

B. C. D.

*Ontario College of Education,
June 1932.*

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(For topics and sub-titles, refer to the Index.)

The following books of reference should be available in the classroom or at least in the library for the use of every class studying English Composition:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| <i>The Concise Oxford Dictionary</i> | Oxford |
| <i>Fowler's Modern English Usage</i> | Oxford |
| <i>Rules for Compositors and Readers</i> | Oxford |
| <i>Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases</i> | J. M. Dent |
| <i>Crabb's English Synonyms</i> | Harpers |
| <i>Great English Short Stories</i> | Clarke, Irwin |
| <i>Great Essays of All Nations</i> | Clarke, Irwin |

BOOKS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

| | | |
|---|---------------|-------------------|
| <i>The Writing of English</i> | Warner | Blackie |
| <i>Better Writing</i> | Canby | Harcourt, Brace |
| <i>The Art of Writing</i> | Quiller-Couch | Macmillan |
| <i>Self-Criticism in English</i> | Palmer | Houghton, Mifflin |
| <i>Expression in Speech and Writing</i> | Lamborn | Oxford |
| <i>Pen and Ink</i> | Pocock | Dent |
| <i>The Art of Writing</i> | Stevenson | Chatto and Windus |

(See also pages 231, 248, and 283.)

MODELS AND PROJECTS FOR ENGLISH COMPOSITION

I

HOW TO BE EXACT

IDEAS are the bones to which cling the flesh and blood of good writing. How to replace the flabby flesh of vague expressions by the lithe muscular tissue of terse statements, and how to purify, enrich and quicken a style that is sluggish or anæmic, you shall learn in subsequent lessons. Your immediate task is to learn to recognize ideas when you see them, and to express them in language that will make them completely and clearly intelligible to your reader. By *idea* is meant any picture or perception or even supposition which may occur in your mind. If your senses be always alert, your mind will receive many pictures or images, and from two or more of these images or ideas a thought may be formed.

It is not an exaggeration to say that thoughts stream almost endlessly through the mind. What a bedlam we should make, if we went babbling every thought that came to us! In writing, at least, time and the powers of human endurance forbid such a profligate waste of the patience of other people. We

naturally write only those thoughts that seem to be most worth-while to ourselves or most significant to a reader. Not all the grain that comes to the mill is ground, and the very process of selection enforces upon the writer the need for the neatest word to fit his idea and the tidiest sentence to convey his thought. If the thought is clear, words to express it will be easily found.

In the exercises which follow in this lesson, some preliminary thinking will be done on the ideas of other people; later you will be required to express your own thoughts. But in all that you write, try to be not copious, ornate and literary, but concise and exact. Practise a style of writing that is at once plain, terse and vivid, and in which there can be no obscurity, confusion or ambiguity of thought. For the present, leave nothing to the imagination of your reader. Strive to be as logical and impersonal as you can. You will be sufficiently entertaining to hold the interest of your reader, when you can construct a sentence which has in it the precision of a sign-post and some of the snap that may be brought into the lash of a whip. Remember always that only upon the clean, hard bones of clear and concrete thought can safely be built the complex anatomy of English prose style.

Interpreting

A thought must tell at once or not at all. HAZLITT

In this sentence Hazlitt has given expression to four distinct ideas. From the following transcriptions, select the statement that most aptly conveys the meaning of the original one, and show in what respects the others are faulty:

1. You must be concise and straight to the point or your thought has no value.

2. You must concentrate on a thought when it comes or you will never get it again.

3. A thought must be told as soon as it is formed or it becomes confused in the mind.

4. One must get a clear impression of a thought at once or he will never get it.

5. One must express a thought at once or he will lose it.

6. A thought must be expressed at once or be forever lost.

7. A thought, if any good, must be told at once before someone else thinks of it.

8. A thought must register in its full significance immediately, else it will be lost.

These statements reveal not only the degree of each writer's intelligent grasp of Hazlitt's meaning, but the writer's power to express his own interpretation concisely. It should be noticed that between each one's grasp of the thought and his power of expression, there is a distinct relationship.

EXERCISE I

Write in your own words the meaning of the following statements:

✓ 1. To most men, experience is like the stern lights of a ship, which illumine only the track it has passed. ✓

COLERIDGE

✓ 2. Life is like playing a violin solo in public and learning the instrument as one goes on. ✓

SAMUEL BUTLER

✓ 3. Life consists in what a man is thinking of all day.

EMERSON

*Your smelting furnace is
your thoughtful soul*

- ✓ 4. Wheresoever manners and fashions are corrupted,
language is. It imitates the public riot.

BEN JONSON

- ✓ 5. A man's style is his mind's voice. EMERSON

- ✓ 6. Execution is the Chariot of Genius. BLAKE

7. Difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of
idleness. JOHNSON

8. The wise only possess ideas: the greater part of
mankind are possessed by them. COLERIDGE

- ✓ 9. Self-sacrifice enables us to sacrifice other people
without blushing. BERNARD SHAW

10. Amusement is the happiness of those that cannot
think. POPE

Your best restatement of one of these epigrams is clumsy and diffuse when compared with the original. This does not imply a weakness on your part; it simply proves another's strength. These celebrated authors have the knack of turning a phrase smoothly. With apparent ease they have combined compactness of thought, economy of words, imagination, and rhythm. Try hereafter to express yourself as concisely and pointedly as they have done. This way lies the approach to a strong and individual prose style.

EXERCISE 2

Reword and reconstruct the following sentences until they are prim and epigrammatic:

1. There is more pleasure in journeying with high hopes than in reaching one's goal.
2. The oldest inhabitant of a community is given every consideration but nobody wishes to change places with him.
3. The fewer things we wish for, the greater is our peace of mind.

4. Some men lose their tempers while trying to prove to others their own good taste.
5. It requires wisdom to give one good advice but still more wisdom is necessary to know how to benefit from good advice.
6. Try to acquire what you like best or you will be forced to find satisfaction in what the world is pleased to leave you.
7. The purpose of a cistern is to hold water; the function of a fountain is to permit water to overflow.
8. If people would spend more time in thinking, less time would be lost in performing useless acts.

Accuracy

It is not necessary to stress the importance of choosing the most appropriate words in which to express a particular thought. H. B. Wheatley in *Literary Blunders* makes a careful distinction between the meanings of the words *blunder* and *mistake*:

The words "blunder" and "mistake" are often treated as synonyms; thus we usually call our blunders mistakes, and our friends style our mistakes blunders. In truth, the class of blunders is a subdivision of the *genus* mistakes. Many mistakes are very serious in their consequences, but there is almost always some sense of fun connected with a blunder, which is a mistake usually caused by some mental confusion. Lexicographers state that it is an error due to stupidity and carelessness, but blunders are often caused by a too great sharpness and quickness. Sometimes a blunder is no mistake at all, as when a man blunders on the right explanation; thus he arrives at the right goal, but by an unorthodox road. . . . Some years ago there was an article in the *Saturday Review* on "the knowledge necessary to make a blunder," and this title gives the clew to what a blunder

really is. It is caused by a confusion of two or more things, and unless something is known of these things a blunder cannot be made. A perfectly ignorant man has not sufficient knowledge to blunder.

EXERCISE I

With the assistance of Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*, or some other good book of synonyms, and the aid of a reliable dictionary, distinguish between the meanings of the following words:

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| game | sport | scholar | pupil |
| enjoyment | pleasure | custom | habit |
| apprehension | comprehension | character | reputation |
| wages | salary | crime | sin |
| answer | reply | politeness | courtesy |
| avocation | vocation | fault | defect |
| defacement | disfigurement | inference | implication |
| evidence | testimony | imagination | fancy |
| ability | capacity | novice | amateur |
| adherence | adhesion | argument | plea |

EXERCISE 2

Show the precise meaning with which each of the words in the following groups may be properly used:

(Read Fowler's article on *humour*, p. 240, *Modern English Usage* and compare your definitions with his for thoroughness and precision.)

busy, industrious, diligent, assiduous, sedulous; face, countenance, features, visage, physiognomy; concise, terse, succinct, compendious, compact, laconic, sententious, pithy, curt; get, acquire, obtain, procure, attain, gain, win, earn; foretell, predict, prophesy, forecast, presage, forebode, portend, augur, prognosticate; old, ancient, antique, antiquated, archaic, obsolete, immemorial, elderly, aged, venerable, decrepit, senile; save, bland, unctuous, fulsome, smug; complaisant, elegant,

trim, dapper, spruce, genteel, urbane, gracious, affable, benign; talkative, loquacious, garrulous, fluent, voluble, glib; weak, debilitated, feeble, infirm, impotent; wise, learned, erudite, sagacious, sapient, sage, judicious, prudent, provident, discreet; regard, respect, esteem, deference, reverence, veneration.

EXERCISE 3

With the aid of *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* give the derivations of the following words, and try in each case to distinguish between the early and the present-day meaning of the word: (Use headings to organize your work as in the two examples immediately following.)

| <i>Word</i> | <i>Source</i> | <i>Root</i> | <i>Early meaning</i> | <i>Present-day meaning</i> |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| fond | Saxon | fon, become insipid | doting, foolish | affectionate |
| eccentric | Greek | ek, out of, kentron, centre | not revolving round the centre | whimsical |

algebra, alkali, amateur, analysis, antiseptic, arbitration, arrogance, battalion, bayonet, biography, brogue, caligraphy, caricature, cinema, coagulation, collaboration, concept, conservative, contralto, correlated, corrugated, cosmopolitan, crescendo, curate, curious, decent, democracy, discrepancy, dissipate, domestic, economy, energetic, equilibrium, excrescence, extravagant, flotilla, franchise, geometry, gymnasium, hallelujah, indemnity, inertia, ingenious, ingenuous, inimical, insurgent, interim, itinerary, landscape, megaphone, metaphor, mimeograph, minimize, moccasin, mortgage, muscular, naive, nankeen, nausea, nutritious, paragon, paraphernalia, parasite, pecuniary, perforate, plausible, plutocracy, pneumatics, polka, propaganda, propensity, psychology, reciprocity, renaissance, ritualism, robust, security,

slogan, stenography, subsidy, superior, surreptitious, syllogism, sympathy, syndicate, technique, telephone, tomahawk, utilitarian, vengeance, vigorous, viking, vindication, violent, vocation, yacht.

EXERCISE 4

Incorporate each of the following words in a phrase and then give for each a synonym and an antonym, preferably a simpler word:

| <i>Word</i> | <i>Phrase</i> | <i>Synonym</i> | <i>Antonym</i> |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| perfunctory | a perfunctory inspection | superficial | thorough |
| <p> <u>alleviate</u>, <u>affected</u>, <u>aggressive</u>, agitated, abusive, atrocious, <u>blatant</u>, <u>brazen</u>, conciliatory, <u>choleric</u>, <u>chronic</u>, craven, <u>dignified</u>, <u>decent</u>, <u>evasive</u>, <u>evanescent</u>, engrossed, <u>fabulous</u>, <u>fallible</u>, <u>flagrant</u>, hypocritical, <u>instinctive</u>, insidious, <u>inexorable</u>, incisive, <u>inscrutable</u>, imposing, inimitable, impetuous, invalidated, infamous, lineal, mollified, <u>modest</u>, <u>malicious</u>, <u>mediocre</u>, <u>mundane</u>, morbid, neutral, obnoxious, occult, <u>opaque</u>, premeditated, <u>prodigious</u>, <u>poignant</u>, perfidious, preposterous, peremptory, <u>reciprocal</u>, sceptical, sordid, salutary, sporadic, <u>spontaneous</u>, seditious, systematic, supercilious, spasmodic, trenchant, <u>terse</u>, <u>volatile</u>, voracious, <u>winsome</u>, wonted. </p> | | | |

27.

It is good to know the meanings of a great many words, but unless one knows how to use words accurately his writing will be either vague or ponderous, and his speech, either bookish or verbose. Etymology and philology are excellent studies, the pursuits of men of learning, but learning out of place is pedantry, the weakness of scholarship. In the use of words, one reflects not only knowledge but judgment and good taste. Often the best reason for knowing the origin and history of a learned

word like *inaugurate*, is to realize the simplicity and clearness of a word like *begin*.

In Fowler's *Modern English Usage* read the sections on formal words, genteelism, haziness, illiteracies, illogicalities, incongruous vocabulary, long variants, novelty-hunting, true and false etymology.

EXERCISE 5

The following sentences show how ridiculous words appear when misused. How many cases can you find of the violation of purity, propriety and precision in the use of words?

- ✓ 1. Shopping was hectic this forenoon.
- ✓ 2. I expect to receive an invite to that proceeding.
3. The gent held decisive opinions and was punctilious in their observation.
- ✓ 4. I soon became imbibed with the desire to augment my scholastic education.
- ✓ 5. "Alice in Wonderland" is a cute story.
6. The mortician is an astute, ambitious and uncommonly zealous individual.
- ✓ 7. The snow rendered the roads impracticable.
8. The tonsorial artist's countenance was protuberant.
- ✓ 9. I accept your apology and acquit you from all blame.
10. The individual became conscious of a severe pain in the pie belt.
11. Debilitated by a long indisposition the patient looked down in the mouth and relinquished all hope of resuscitation.
12. The actress was as pretty as a picture and the crowd went wild.
- ✓ 13. I guess I shall locate out West.

14. The young man confessed his intention of going to sea.
- ✓ 15. The medical officer declined to accept remuneration or emolument.
16. He put aside the omens on account of their incertitude.
17. In such a changing attitude, surely this statesman demonstrates a demoralizing absence of political correctitude.
- ✓ 18. Peruse this statement and elucidate its meaning.
- ✓ 19. Several circumstances seem to militate against that supposition.
20. He deprecates the whole affair without stint.
21. A vast concourse was assembled to see the disastrous conflagration.
22. The family physician's residence, habiliments and style of living corresponded with his means.

EXERCISE 6

Examine the following passages, and try to discover to what qualities each owes its effectiveness: (For suggestions see exercise on page 13.)

I

Language most shews a man: Speak, that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind. No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech. Nay, it is likened to a man: and as we consider feature and composition in a man, so words in language; in the greatness, aptness, sound, structure and harmony of it.

Some men are tall and big, so some language is high and great. Then the words are chosen, their sound ample, the composition full, the absolution plenteous, and poured out all grave, sinewy and strong. Some are little and dwarfs, so of speech it is humble and low, the words poor

and flat, the members and period thin and weak, without knitting or number.

The middle are of a just stature. There the language is plain and pleasing; even without stopping, round without swelling; all well-torned, composed, elegant and accurate.

The vicious language is vast and gaping, swelling and irregular: when it contends to be high, full of rock, mountain and pointedness: as it affects to be low, it is abject and creeps, full of bogs and holes. And according to their subject these styles vary, and lose their names: for that which is high and lofty, declaring excellent matter, becomes vast and tumorous, speaking of petty and inferior things: so that which was even and apt in a mean and plain subject, will appear most poor and humble in a high argument. Would you not laugh to meet a great counsellor of a state in a flat cap, with his trunk hose, and a hobby-horse cloak, his gloves under his girdle, and yond haberdasher in a velvet gown, furred with sables? There is a certain latitude in these things, by which we find the degrees.

From *Discoveries*

BEN JONSON

II

To begin then with Shakespeare; he was the man who, of all modern and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of nature were still present to him, and he drew them not laboriously, but luckily: when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him:

no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets.

From *An Essay of Dramatic Poesie* JOHN DRYDEN

III

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to set him above the want of hourly assistance, or to extinguish the desire of fond endearments and tender officiousness; and, therefore, no one should think it unnecessary to learn those arts by which friendship may be gained. Kindness is preserved by constant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleasures; but such benefits only can be bestowed as others are capable to receive, and such pleasures only imparted as others are qualified to enjoy.

SAMUEL JOHNSON

IV

Some men's thoughts are like machines, they ignite by the mere attrition of sentences, and throw light on the dim places of argument. Other men's minds never ignite at all. Some have fusee ideas, and smoulder merely. Others have tar minds, and give out more odour and smoke than flame. Now and then a man would get up and strike his arguments together like the old flint and tinder-box, producing more noise than sparks. Occasionally a speaker burnt with a strong, steady flame of speech, which both lighted and warmed every one, and the hearer saw clearer ever after. There are hearers with india rubber minds, which stretch with a discourse. Some understandings are like porcelain, and crack if you hit them with a hard syllogism—and the parts never unite any more. Others speak like a railway whistle and impart knowledge and the headache together.

From *History of Co-operation*

HOLYOAKE

V

"Of making books there is no end," complained the Preacher; and did not perceive how highly he was praising

letters as an occupation. There is no end, indeed, to making books or experiments, or to travel, or to gathering wealth. Problem gives rise to problem. We may study forever, and we are never as learned as we would. We have never made a statue worthy of our dreams. And when we have discovered a continent, or crossed a chain of mountains, it is only to find another ocean or another plain upon the further side. In the infinite universe there is room for our swiftest diligence and to spare. It is not like the works of Carlyle, which can be read to an end. Even in a corner of it, in a private park, or in the neighborhood of a single hamlet, the weather and the seasons keep so deftly changing that, although we walk there for a lifetime, there will be always something new to startle and delight us.

From *El Dorado*

STEVENSON

1. In each selection what is the relative proportion of

(a) Anglo-Saxon words and Latin derivatives.

(b) Verbs or nouns and adverbs or adjectives.

(c) Similes and metaphors.

(d) Long sentences and short sentences.

2. With suitable adjectives describe the effect of these proportions upon the writer's subject and style, and the reader's imagination and feelings.

3. Which passage is, in style, most (a) vivid, (b) forceful, (c) muscular, (d) concise, (e) ornate, (f) rich and varied, (g) simple, (h) thin and bare, (i) graceful, (j) readable.

4. Carefully make a neat *copy* of the selection you like best, and as you write try to get the feel of the author's style, his way of fitting words together.

5. Rewrite selection III, using as far as possible Anglo-Saxon words, and then find suitable adjectives to describe the style of (a) the original and (b) your version.

EXERCISE 7

1. Read this literary curiosity and make a list of all the different points of style with which it deals.

2. Does the critic make any of the mistakes that he would condemn in the writing of others?

3. In a paragraph write a clear and precise statement of what you have learned so far about the art of writing a good prose style.

Collective Illiteracy

SIR HERBERT STEPHEN in *The London Mercury*

We are often told that a company of human beings, acting as one person, and feeling that the responsibility for what they do is distributed among them, will do things so foolish or so wicked that no single member of the company would ever think of doing them personally, or ever be able to forgive himself for it if he did. A striking instance of this failing came to light in the *Times* of July 13th. It was a letter recommending that an inscribed tablet in memory of Byron should be placed in Westminster Abbey. It was signed by four Ex-Ministers—three of them Prime Ministers—and ten gentlemen standing in the front rank of men of letters. No woman signed it—but I fear this was an accident. I reproduce it below in the left-hand column, with comments on the language in the right-hand column:—

1st Paragraph

Lord Rosebery has anticipated what many who are wholly unconnected with or unaware of the project to dedicate a memorial to Byron in the centenary year must feel and desire to urge.

I print this in order to give the whole letter, and observe only that the writer does not specify the centenary. Every year is "the centenary year" of various people and events.

2nd Paragraph

That interment at Westminster should have been refused a hundred years ago was in accordance with the spirit of the time.

We believe that that spirit has changed.

Byron, the product of certain influences of heredity and environment,

like other over-sensitive temperaments,

displayed weakness in matters of conduct in contrast with his conspicuous courage in matters of opinion.

Few human beings have been subjected to a more exacting inquisition both in life and

Interment at Westminster was refused. "Should have been" ought to mean that it was not.

The sentence begins in what ought to have been the middle, and finishes with the beginning.

The writer means that the spirit of 1924 is the contrary, on this point, of the spirit of 1824. He says that the spirit of 1824 has changed its mind.

What is the use of this verbiage? He might as well say "Byron, who sometimes wore a hat, coat, and trousers."

A man may be a poet, and a peer, but he cannot be a temperament.

Weakness does not contrast with courage. They may, and often do, co-exist. There is no courage in holding an opinion, though there well may be in expressing it.

Who made the inquisition? What did it exact? How can an inquisition exact anything? Inquisition is

after death than the man of genius who was ever his own worst advocate.

His star was for a while eclipsed, but it rose again in his maturer years,

when he became a trumpet voice

for inarticulate people stifled by reaction and repression.

only a long word for enquiry.

If the allegation that Byron "was ever his own worst advocate" means that he habitually asserted worse things about himself than were asserted by anyone else, it is not true. If it means something else I do not know what it means.

Stars do not "rise" after being "eclipsed"; they become visible by reason of the movement of the moon, or whatever eclipsed them.

He has been a temperament, and now he is a voice. Does a trumpet voice mean the voice of a trumpet, or a voice that resembles the sound of a trumpet? And in either case, what trumpet?

People may make inarticulate vocal sounds, but they cannot themselves be either articulate or inarticulate. What kind of reaction, of what, from what action, and what kind of repression, of what, stifles people? The whole phrase is unmeaning.

His ardent protest
against every despotism

This is nonsense. There were many despotisms against which he never thought of protesting, including such as the unqualified despotism of a captain over his ship, and Lord Byron's despotism over his own household.

and,
after his long pilgrimage
along the road of disillusion,

"Long pilgrimage along" is very ugly, and the metaphor about the road has no appropriateness, and little, if any, meaning.

his ultimate service and
sacrifice in the cause of
liberty

In the cause of Greek liberty to turn out the Turks, and manage Greek affairs, and against the cause of Turkish liberty to control the affairs of Greece.

have lifted Byron of
the latter years on to a
higher plane

"Latter" here should be "later." No former years have been mentioned. "On to" is always ugly, and almost always pleonastic. In this instance "on" is the redundant word.

and demand the
revision of a prejudicial
judgment.

It does not matter much who were the judges, or who are to revise the judgment. But what in the world is a prejudicial judgment? Does it mean a judgment delivered before

judgment, or more loosely, a judgment which is prejudicial, in the sense of injurious to somebody? I do not suppose the writer could tell me.

3rd Paragraph

So much for the moral issue.

I suppose the question whether it is right or wrong to place in the Abbey a tablet commemorating Byron, is the "moral issue." It is a pompous name for it.

In all other respects it can hardly be questioned that

What other respects? I can think of no others, except the suitability of the proposed monument, and the questions how much it will cost and who will pay for it.

his fulfilled renown as a great poet

How is renown fulfilled, and when was Byron's fulfilled?

and his influence, extending far beyond the limits of his native land, as a social and in the highest sense a democratic force

What is the highest sense, and what are the lower senses, of the words democratic force? Are they not, in this connection, and is not the word social equally, mere turgid nonsense?

entitle him to a niche in the

The thing to which the writer claims that Byron is

Abbey.

entitled is a monument, or inscribed tablet, in the Abbey. Such a memorial may or may not be in a niche, but it is not a niche.

4th Paragraph

Reading the words *implora pace* on a grave in the cemetery at Ferrara, Byron expressed the hope that those two words and nothing beside might one day be inscribed over him.

Even if "nothing more" is less affected and more accurate than "nothing beside" this is much the least deplorable sentence in the letter.

The silent prayer

Why silent prayer? Every prayer must be made either in thought or in speech, and no prayer can be communicated to other people except by the use of words.

which they imply, perhaps even better in their Latin form, *implorat pacem*,

The words imply nothing. They are an assertion that the deceased person implores, or prays. I am not sure that the comma after "imply" is not misplaced.

could nowhere be more appropriately offered than in Poets' Corner,

It does not much matter where people offer prayers of this nature. This is a clumsy way of stating the obvious fact that the proposed memorial would be more

suitably placed in or close to Poets' Corner.

now that a "late remorse of love" has prompted many of his countrymen to claim for him a national record in the company of our illustrious dead.

The tag is somewhat less contemptible than most of the communication which it concludes, but it is really the national records of the illustrious dead with which the new national record would be "in company" not the illustrious dead themselves.

With some reluctance, and after considerable hesitation, I decide to reproduce here the names of the eminent persons who signed the letter dissected above. They were Balfour, H. H. Asquith, D. Lloyd George, Crawford and Balcarres, Edmund Gosse, Frederick Kenyon, E. V. Lucas, G. M. Trevelyan, Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling, Henry Newbolt, J. W. Mackail, Lawrence Binyon, Rennell Rodd.

I do not venture to predict anything about men who have occupied the illustrious situation of Prime Minister, but I am confident that any one of the other eleven would incur heavy expense, and undergo considerable personal suffering sooner than allow this vulgar and blundering tosh to appear conspicuously in the *Times* signed by himself only, and purporting to be his own language. Together they all signed it. I can hardly believe that they all read it, and I do not believe any one of them read it with real attention. I do not for one moment suggest that every one who uses the English language ought always to use it correctly and elegantly—though I believe it does its work better on the occasions when it can be correct without any loss of appropriateness to the surrounding facts and to the tastes of those to whom it is addressed; but I maintain that when eminent men of letters are jointly making a public

announcement about an exceedingly eminent man of letters, they ought to write good English.

Without expressing any opinion on the matter in controversy I admit that I was interested and pleased to observe that the letter in which the proposal of the fourteen was rejected, having only one signature, was written in correct, dignified, and forcible English, such as a scholar and a gentleman ought to use in public.

EXERCISE IN PUNCTUATION

Punctuate the following sentences, and explain the use of each mark you insert:

1. He asked when are you going
2. Now if that is true I will go
3. Take out the knives forks spoons and plates
4. It was a bright warm June day and we decided to visit the famous Canadian historical monument
5. I do not know where it is but I will ask a policeman
6. The next question is Who heard him say so
7. To see the white elephant is my reason for going
8. If you did I care not
9. Truth ennobles man learning adorns him
10. Three properties belong to wisdom nature learning and experience
11. In sooth I know not why I am so sad
12. Be sure to reject this offer it is the only wise plan
13. If you will go at once you may see him
14. Good friends sweet friends let me not stir you up
15. Look forward not back
16. Soldier rest thy warfare o'er
17. What a piece of work is a man
18. A tall figure of a man muscular and spare but a little bent confronted Villon
19. Thou too sail on O ship of state
20. Man never is but always to be blest

II

HOW TO BE CLEAR

“Never imagine yourself not to be otherwise than what it might appear to others that what you were or might have been was not otherwise than what you had been would have appeared to them to be otherwise.”

From *Alice's Adventures*
in Wonderland

LEWIS CARROLL

THE first aim of every honest writer, is to be understood. An apt word shines like a diamond and cuts a fine figure before the reader's eye, but a clear sentence, like a ray of light in a dark room, illuminates and invites the mind. When a sentence is wordy, the writer's manner of thinking was ponderous. If the meaning is obscure, the ideas were imperfectly formed or “half-baked” in the writer's mind. If the writer wanders round and round the point without hitting it, the point was not clear in his own mind. When the reader is bewildered, the writer himself was confused. Conciseness is the secret of style, but before one can write a keen, incisive style, he must know thoroughly and precisely what he wants to say. If the meaning is to be easily and readily apparent to the reader, one should not attempt to write a sentence until he has a clear conception of the thought he wishes to express. To communicate to others a clear thought or vivid impression, one must have a full, clear view of his subject. One cannot give what he has

not. Get a firm grasp of your ideas, think straight, and make your sentences give you a correct account of your thoughts.

Some aids to clearness:

1. Be definite. Avoid words and phrases like *surely, of course, perhaps, probably, no doubt, I think that, it seems nearly impossible to do this, in the matter of the above qualities, and the like*. In an essay these phrases stand as signs of laziness or as signals of distress.

2. Be sparing in the use of these words: *indeed, rather, for example, wonderful, beautiful, and very* (the most irritating form of emphasis).

3. Be concise. Never use three words where two will suffice. Make your sentences short and pithy. Do not say "The prospect of attending the dissertation is not of an enticing nature" if you mean "I do not wish to go to the lecture".

Correct:

- (a) It gave me great pleasure to accept your hospitality yesterday evening.
- (b) A motley congregation of hoi polloi was gathered at the surf.
- (c) She extracted from a favourite animal liberal portions of its nightly tribute to the dairy.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

4. Use words in their natural sequence.

Correct:

- (a) The house was built, planned and sold in the same month.
- (b) We have prostrated ourselves at the foot of the throne, we have remonstrated, we have petitioned.

5. Avoid vague reference of pronouns, especially in the use of *which, it* and *they*, by supplying the nouns, using

synonyms, changing the person of the pronouns, or by breaking the sentence into two shorter ones.

Correct:

- (a) He sold his car, which saved him from starvation.
- (b) She placed her hand on the book, one of the largest I had ever seen.
- (c) John spent the day with Harry; he had a motor car.
- (d) He stepped on the cat's tail and it turned upon him.
- (e) The lion had a struggle with the man and he killed him.
- (f) The girls asked the boys whether the books which they had in their hands were those they had seen in their desks.

6. Be fastidious in your use of participles and of the absolute construction. Make plain the connection between a participle and the noun or pronoun to which it refers. Wherever possible use a construction which is more concise and robust than those in the following.

Correct:

- (a) In removing the cover, the dish slipped.
- (b) Having arrived at the school, the bell began to ring.
- (c) The train having been derailed, we were late.
- (d) It being Friday, he left early.
- (e) She asked the teacher, he being present.

7. Place all the elements of a series in the same grammatical construction.

Correct:

- (a) Swimming is more pleasure than to walk.
- (b) He decided to go to the market, and if he saw anything he liked, he would buy it.
- (c) I suggest that you repair the car and a thorough cleaning of the valves.

8. Choose the right preposition and avoid using too many in a sentence.

Correct:

- (a) He would not conform with the ideas of the minority.
- (b) A is different to B.
- (c) He gave an explanation on the theory.
- (d) The difficulties in the transportation of passengers and of merchandise through the heart of the city are numerous.

9. Avoid a traffic jam of nouns.

Correct: Skyscraper office construction is not an Alaskan building problem.

10. Use verbs correctly in tense and in sense. Prefer the present tense to the future and the active voice to the passive.

Correct:

- (a) We would have liked to have seen it.
- (b) He intended to have been present.
- (c) Yonder one of the three airships begin to set sail.

11. Do not omit any word needed to make the meaning clear.

Correct:

- (a) I imagine a lighted city from above would hardly seem a city.
- (b) The treasurer and secretary took charge of the money.

12. Reduce the number of adverbs and adjectives to a minimum, and when you must use them, place them as near as possible to the words or groups of words with which they are grammatically connected.

Place carefully in sentences the following words or phrases:

Only, always, slowly, at least, at all events.

13. In Fowler's *Modern English Usage* read the sections on absolute construction, Analogy, Hackneyed phrases, Inversion, Jargon, Metaphor, Position of adverbs, Preposition at end, Pronouns, Pairs & snares, Subjunctives, and Swapping horses.

14. Read what Fowler has to say on each of the following: all right, case, few, if and when, only, other, so, that, thus, view, and which.

15. In *The Art of Writing*, by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, read the chapter on "Jargon".

EXERCISE I

What did the writer mean?

In studying the following extracts, taken from students' essays, try to discover the cause and the nature of each mistake. This may be done orally in class.

1. I looked at it in blank thought for some time.
2. While father related to mother's admiring ears.
3. The moon was full and it was smiling down upon us from above.
4. The threshing machine is one of the embellishments of life.
5. Does not your heart beat high with exultation as as the choirs of the birds sing tunes to the blessed poetry of God.
6. The pioneer farmer of those good old days dragged his limb of the ash over Mother Nature's daughter's face.
7. The toboggans were very eagerly awaiting us.
8. The pioneer farmers developed their muscles instead of their brains as the farmer of today does to improve his soil.
9. What was this book chosen for me to be read out of for?
10. The cattle were pasturizing in the fields.

11. They had to take physical exercise and get into the game because there wasn't any way out if they didn't get in.
12. Thus opportunity in the shape of a rain knocked at the door of the camp, was seized and appreciated by all.
13. This Canada of ours should bask in its own light of unprecedented democracy.
14. A few cows lazily chew at the branches of the bushes as if amusing themselves.
15. Treat a cow as you would a lady and she will pay for herself.
16. Running to the window the placid bosom of the lake met the eye beckoning and inviting.

EXERCISE 2

The following sentence is an excellent example of jargon:

"The teacher had a most sympathetic attitude on her part towards the class, yet she very seldom had to exercise discipline—she possessed a striking personality and a most convincing manner—one could not help but pay the strictest attention."

This sentence brings to mind a quotation from Dickens: "Vether," said Mr. Sam Weller, "it's worth goin' through so much to learn so little, as the charity-boy said ven he got to the end of the alphabet, is a matter o' taste."

Hackneyed vs. New Phrases

The fields lay still as death in the cool of the evening, only a gentle breeze sighed in the branches. The sun had set like a great crimson ball behind the western horizon, and the blood-red glow had now nearly faded. The shades of night were falling fast, and soon in the mantle of the sky little stars began to twinkle like diamonds. Then across

the meadows floated the crystal clear notes of a distant bell, from the little grey church that nestled amid the trees.

The fields lay content and quiet in the dew-cool air, only a little restless wind teased the drowsy branches. The sun had burned out his passionate vitality in glory, and now listlessly had slipped beyond our world and its display. Slowly the sky was drained of the afterglow, and like the tapers of a thousand saints, the stars began to prick the heavens with their mild white light. Then into the quiet came swinging the grave pure notes of a bell; a church, cherished in a wooded dip of the plain, gave to the world its benison.

ELEANOR PARNELL, *The Bookman*

In how many ways is the second paragraph better than the first? Can you improve upon the second paragraph?

EXERCISE 3

Correct the following:

1. Her character was such that one could not help but be taken by her.
2. Thus we develop our own ideas both in written and oral fashion.
3. Well, in my own experience, I can truthfully say that the teacher of Latin at my school was of the greatest help in developing this habit in me.
4. In conclusion, I may say that I will always remember that teacher as the greatest influence on me in my life so far.
5. When she entered the class room, not only myself but the whole class, voluntarily gave ourselves up to perfect attention.
6. He was our friend for life the day he gave his approval of bobbed locks when that fashion had begun to rage.

7. He imparted to me his own certainty of the reality of literature.
8. The teacher applied the ideas which the Latin poets had to the views of the present day and they suffered not at all in their comparison.

EXERCISE 4

Arrange these sentences so as to bring out the sense intended:

1. A robin sees a worm while it is flying.
2. Booted and spurred, with a heavy stride, on the opposite shore walked Paul Revere.
3. The commander-in-chief was again defeated and slain.
4. The voice is only suspended for a moment.
5. A servant will obey a master's orders that he likes.
6. The bandit was shot from the church, in the eye, as he stood in a door, of which he instantly died.
7. The man came to his death by excessive drinking producing apoplexy in the mind of the jury.
8. I did not hear what you said, coming so suddenly into the noisy room.
9. The earth looks as though it was round on the map.
10. We departed and left a great many people very sorry behind us.
11. In the hall hangs a picture beautifully painted behind the door.
12. He left the room quickly dropping the purse on the floor.

III

DEFINING

A DEFINITION is a group of words in which the precise nature of a thing, a process or an idea is set forth, made clear or stated. The words should be accurate, simple, and clear, and the group should be compact. Extraneous matter must be excluded. Digression is forbidden. Fire directly at your subject and make every word count on the bull's eye. A thing may be defined by example, comparison and contrast, analysis, or historical background. A good definition often contains more than one of these methods. How many are used in the following example?

Definition of a Great Man

But of a Great Man especially, of him I will venture to assert that it is incredible he should have been other than true. It seems to me the primary foundation of him, and of all that can lie in him, this. No Mirabeau, Napoleon, Burns, Cromwell, no man adequate to do anything, but is first of all in right earnest about it; what I call a sincere man. I should say *sincerity*, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic. Not the sincerity that calls itself sincere; ah no, that is a very poor matter indeed;—a shallow braggart conscious sincerity; oftenest self-conceit mainly. The Great Man's sincerity is of the kind he cannot speak of, is not conscious of: nay, I suppose, he is conscious rather of *insincerity*; for what man can walk accurately by the law of truth for one

day? No, the Great Man does not boast himself sincere, far from that; perhaps does not ask himself if he is so: I would say rather, his sincerity does not depend on himself; he cannot help being sincere! The great Fact of Existence is great to him. Fly as he will, he cannot get out of the awful presence of this Reality. His mind is so made; he is great by that, first of all. Fearful and wonderful, real as Life, real as Death, is this Universe to him. Though all men should forget its truth, and walk in a vain show, he cannot. At all moments the Flame-image glares-in upon him; undeniable, there, there!—I wish you to take this as my primary definition of a Great Man. A little man may have this, it is competent to all men that God has made: but a Great Man cannot be without it.

From *Hero As Prophet*

THOMAS CARLYLE

EXERCISE I

After studying these definitions, write your own definition of poetry.

1. Poetry is music in words, and music is poetry in sound. FULLER

2. Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings taking its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity. WORDSWORTH

3. Poetry has given me the habit of wishing to discover the good and the beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me. COLERIDGE

4. Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds, the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own redeeming from decay the visitations of the divinity in man. SHELLEY

5. Poetry is nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth. ARNOLD

6. Poetry is something to make us wiser and better

by continually revealing those types of beauty and truth which God has set in all men's souls. LOWELL

EXERCISE 2

In the following group of definitions, separate the good from the bad, and state orally what you consider to be the defects of the six worst definitions:

1. Biology is the science that treats of living organisms.
2. An automobile is a machine propelled by a gasoline engine.
3. A needle is a small piece of polished steel sharp at one end.
4. Rhythm is a general swelling and flowing movement of language.
5. Bolshevism means against the government.
6. A square is a plane figure with four equal sides and four equal angles.
7. A network is anything reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections. DR. JOHNSON
8. Frivolity is the high road to seriousness: it always ends there. E. V. LUCAS
9. A pun rests on a duplicity of sense under unity of sound, and it is essentially of a laughter-provoking nature.
10. An essay is a loose sally of the mind; an irregular, indigested piece, not a regular and orderly composition. DR. JOHNSON
11. It was because honesty was impossible that compromise came in. Compromise is the sure ground between the quicksands of conscience and the truth. E. V. LUCAS
12. A library is a classified collection of books.
13. An hotel is a place where people stay when away from home.
14. Revenge is a kind of wild justice. BACON

15. A prig is one narrowly and self-consciously engrossed in his own mental or spiritual attainments.
16. Capital is a class of people who control the directions in which tend the efforts of the people whom they command.
17. An editorial is an article which expresses one person's opinion on a single subject.

EXERCISE 3

From each of the following groups select two, and define them:

1. a dictionary, a newspaper, a triangle, a hyphen, camouflage, a delegation, a compass, an airplane.
2. gossip, a smuggler, a pessimist, "highbrow", a snob, an opportunist.
3. dividend, a premium, overhead cost, a department store.
4. sportsmanship, socialism, patriotism, romance, sympathy, idealism, school spirit, common sense.
5. to pleat, to baste, to hem, to knit, to patch, to darn, a foul in baseball, "out" in baseball, the uses of *shall* and *will*, a fireless cooker, a vacuum cleaner.

EXERCISE 4

Show that you know the correct meaning of each of the following words by using it in a phrase:

altruism, banal, bathos, calumny, generic, gratuitous, histrionic, inexorable, insidious, jingoism, laconic, meticulous, nuance, obsequious, panacea, querulous, recondite, sedentary, stentorian, surreptitious, trenchant, ubiquitous, virulent.

IV

HOW TO CONVINCE THE READER

That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!

BROWNING

BROWNING'S thrush had not only the gift of song, but a genius for perfection. Some day you may discover where and how birds learn their melodies; a few hours abroad on a summer's day will persuade you that they love to practise their tunes. No less does the right note mark a particular bird than the right word in a context measures the skill of the writer who uses it.

Some people prefer fluency in writing to accuracy of statement. Their mistake is in supposing that we are all born with a "first fine careless rapture" upon our lips, that we are geniuses with the power by the vivid word to write the slogans of mankind. Our misfortune is that we must read their effusions. Set down your first impressions, they say, as if they feared such froth would become in a moment as thin as air. If your ideas are real and clear enough to be worthy of the name, they will not evaporate in the process of thinking, but will take to themselves shape and direction as they are moulded into thought. Moreover, to be most effective and pleasing, the expression of one's thoughts and feelings

should be enlightened by imagination and enlivened by rhythm. It is this thinking of experience into apt and telling phrases and sentences that makes a fine prose style. It is the will to shape a sentence, to turn it over and over in the mind, until it is at once brief, clear and rhythmic, before setting it down on paper. Writing, then, is not a sentimental pastime for capricious faddists or indulgent enthusiasts; it is an art which, like that of the painter or the musician, reflects the skill of the craftsman while it conceals the methods of his art.

The ability to write a fine prose style, is the natural gift of very few people; most of the celebrated writers of today owe their gifts not to nature but to long and persistent practice. Their writings bear evidence of their study and sometimes their imitation of great writers of the past, but the personal element in their style, that which keeps their thoughts alive as literature, was not acquired from without but was brought to the surface from within. Their individuality is to its parent prose what the wake of the ship is to the ship itself. Consequently a few critics have proclaimed that the teaching of prose composition is futile and presumptuous. That is to say, all art is inspiration and cannot be taught. But inspiration alone will not make a man a violinist. He must first have knowledge of the art and skill in the technique. Similarly, to write well one must first know how to handle words, to shape a sentence, and to construct a paragraph. Mastery in these can be attained only through long and patient discipline.

More than three centuries ago, Ben Jonson

wrote "Ready writing makes not good writing; but good writing brings on ready writing." Away then with careless raptures and spontaneous overflows! All hail to clear thinking and sustained effort as the sources of good writing! Never again shall we seek happiness only to make life intolerable, strive to be personalities at the risk of appearing ridiculous, or try to write finely merely to make writing affected! Hereafter we shall try to live fully; to be ourselves at our best, and never bigger or better than we are; and to know precisely what we want to say, and then to say it as precisely as we can. We shall use the best words in the best form, and the most effective sentences in the most effective order, and if style follows, it will, like Falstaff's honour, come unlooked for.

In Fowler's *Modern English Usage* read the sections on barbarisms, cast-iron idiom, elegant variation, false emphasis, false quality, false scent, hyphens, idiom, repetition of words or sounds, rhythm, split infinitive, sturdy indefensibles, two-pence coloured, and worn-out humour.

In Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* study the section on "Means of Communicating Ideas".

Aids to Emphasis

I. Words

Prefer:

- (a) A short word *abuse* to a long word *vituperation*.
- (b) A specific word *rose* to a general word *flower*.
- (c) A figurative word *beacon* to a literal word *light*.

- (d) A beautiful word *butterfly* to an ugly word *bug*.
 (e) An articulate word *whisper* to a mute word *speak*.

EXERCISE I

Study the use of words in the following phrases and sentences and explain how they emphasize:

1. High-erected thoughts seated in a harte of courtesie. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY
2. The approbation of my own conscience. LOCKHART
3. The sweet weariness that follows accustomed toil. HAWTHORNE
4. Thoughts that glow and words that burn.
5. The wind is gathering in the leaves.
6. Autumn in gold sandals treads the stubble fields.
7. Balfour gets to the point at once and then stops. SIR WALTER RALEIGH
8. Truth to the fact and a good spirit in the treatment. STEVENSON
9. The flowers and fruits of style grow on the tree of character. SIR WALTER RALEIGH
10. A poet must lean hard on facts, so hard, sometimes, that they hurt. ROBERT FROST

EXERCISE 2

Examine these idioms and state briefly the difference between idiom and slang:

1. The rules were fixed and I must *abide* by them. TYNDALL
2. Now all is open and *above board* with you. TROLLOPE
3. Poor Richard was to me as an eldest son, *the apple of my eye*. SCOTT

4. *And dar'st thou then
To beard the lion in his den.* SCOTT
5. The colonel was curt but grumpy and Percy soon
beat a retreat. READE
6. A parochial life is not *a bed of roses.* DICKENS
7. That day three thousand Saracens *bit the dust.*
8. I don't want (said Sir Brian) to be a *wet blanket.*
W. E. NORRIS
9. For some reason or other I am *in his black books.*
W. E. NORRIS
10. Professor Dowden *holds a brief* for Shelley.
MATTHEW ARNOLD
11. *He knows on which side his bread is buttered.*
DICKENS
12. For my part I was horribly *cast down.*
R. L. STEVENSON

In your reading of prose be on the alert for idiomatic expressions. Make a hobby of collecting them.

EXERCISE 3

In the following sentences give the emphatic words a more conspicuous place:

1. Then, O Cromwell, thou fall'st a blessed martyr
if thou fall'st.
2. One story for illustration will do as well as another.
3. Carry gentle peace ever in thy right hand.
4. Add virtue to your faith.
5. I read a book sometimes with pleasure.
6. Love is the greatest of these.
7. I repeat the charge to gods and men here of
treasons manifold.
8. Lars Porsena swore by the nine gods.
9. The head that wears a crown lies uneasy.
10. Cicero and his tools shall pay me blood then.

11. In the league the name of Cataline is foremost.
12. You have rated me about my moneys and my usances many a time and oft on the Rialto.
13. I extend this friendship to buy his favour.
14. It is not meet in such a time as this that every nice offence should bear its comment.
15. And I will keep you forever there.
16. Belshazzar the King held festival there high within his royal hall.
17. When he marched away somebody wept.
18. He lay there cold and still.

EXERCISE 4

Find single words to take the place of the italicized phrases:

Example: These statements are *closely related in thought and resemble each other in form.*

These statements are analogous.

1. The mechanic is *sufficiently trained for his job.*
2. He gave his *mental concurrence.*
3. The *pleasant looking* woman spoke to me.
4. The task was *not to be surmounted.*
5. This design is *such that it cannot be obliterated.*
6. *Impaired in its use and value,* a truth soon becomes a thing of the remote past.
7. Her singing was *without imperfection.*
8. *In a state of unwillingness,* he departed.
9. *A needless accumulation of words* is a characteristic of jargon.
10. Few people can *defy the rules of social conduct and get away with it.*
11. This sentence lacks *such excellence as deserves recognition.*
12. The workman's powers of expression were *marked by insufficiency.*

II. Sentences

Prefer:

- (a) brevity to prolixity.
- (b) plainness to ornament.
- (c) lucidity to vagueness.
- (d) liveliness to listlessness.
- (e) euphony to cacophony.

Devices:

- (a) Know your subject thoroughly before you begin to write.
- (b) Preserve unity and coherence in thought.
- (c) Place the most important ideas at the end and the second most important at the beginning of the sentence, where they will readily catch the eye.
- (d) Change the normal order of the words in a sentence, but avoid illogical arrangement of subordinate parts.
- (e) Arrange the parts of a sentence—words, phrases or clauses—in order of climax.
- (f) Repeat an important word or phrase.
- (g) Use the present tense.
- (h) Use illustrations and figures of speech to help the reader to get a clear and ready grasp of your meaning.
- (i) Fit the thought into an appropriate sentence construction, such as periodic, loose, balanced, or mixed.

EXERCISE I

Read the following statements aloud and explain orally to what each owes its effectiveness:

1. Gainsay him, I could not.

2. The world needs men, alert and active.
3. What meanest thou by that? Mend me thou saucy fellow!
4. The perfection of style is variety in unity, freedom, ease, clearness, the power of saying anything, and of striking any note in the scale of human feelings, without impropriety.

From *Introduction to Plato*

JEWETT

5. These idle disputants overlooked the invariable laws of nature, which have connected peace with innocence, plenty with industry, and safety with valour.

GIBBON

6. It is easy enough to pick holes in his grammar, but what is to be said of his goodness, his tenderness.

STEVENSON

7. Poor management is responsible for all this idleness, poverty, wretchedness, and crime.

Kinds of Sentences

A *periodic sentence* is one that is so constructed that the full meaning is not complete until the end.

Example: And now, at last, after weary years of privation and danger, the soldiers returned.

The periodic construction produces the effect of order, compactness, force and dignity. Use the periodic sentence for impressiveness and to stimulate interest, but avoid using a series of them. Too many periodic sentences make a passage appear affected, heavy and pompous.

A *loose sentence* is one that is so constructed that it may be brought to a close at two or more places and still be complete in sense.

Example: The soldiers returned at last, after weary years of privation and danger.

A loose sentence produces a conversational effect. It is easy, natural, simple and graceful. Use the loose construc-

tion for clearness, humour and cadence. Loose sentences break the monotony of a paragraph of short and periodic sentences, but too many of them produce the effect of listless, rambling thought. If you use many of these sentences, take care to vary their beginnings and endings.

A *balanced sentence* is one that contains two clauses, similar in form and either parallel or contrasted in meaning.

Example: To err is human; to forgive, divine.

The balanced sentence gives the effect of terseness and vividness. Use the balanced sentence for contrast, parallelism in meaning, and satire. Too many balanced sentences offend the reader by their regularity.

A *mixed sentence* is one that is partly periodic and partly loose in construction.

Example: We left on Saturday, about noon, during a snow storm, and despite our speed we did not expect to reach before night our journey's end.

Use the mixed sentence for variety or transition.

A *short sentence* produces the effect of sprightliness and animation. Use it for emphasis, relief, directness, and vigour, and to arrest attention. It produces the effect of hurry, quickness, and excitement, but too many short sentences give a jerkiness and abruptness to prose style.

EXERCISE 2

From the following sentences pick out the different kinds:

1. They began a very hot fire at the enemy, who replied vigorously, and the redoubt of Cheverino soon disappeared beneath dense clouds of smoke.
2. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
3. As they were walking at an equal pace, they began to exchange remarks.

4. Well, then, on a certain evening after a day of rain, while he was walking, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, and seeking for some barn in which he could lie down supperless, he saw on the road a monk who was travelling the same way, and saluted him decorously.
5. The bear is a worse feeder than the pig, for whenever he disturbs a maple sugar camp in spring, he always upsets everything.
6. Ireland, before the English conquest, though never governed by a despotic power, had no Parliament.
7. This is not a day of triumph; it is a day of dedication.
8. While all went merrily, the mighty vessel glided on its way and nobody dreamed of danger.
9. It began to snow like fury, and when the snow had swirled down for some time, the engineer found that the straining upon the engine had broken her down.

EXERCISE 3

A proverb is a short, pithy saying which usually means more than it says. Explain the meaning of the following proverbs by using illustrations or examples:

1. A bad book is the worst robber.
2. Do not look a gift horse in the mouth.
3. When in Rome, do as the Romans do.
4. All that glisters is not gold.
5. The better part of valour is discretion.
6. Strike while the iron is hot.
7. Faint heart ne'er won fair lady.
8. People in glass houses should not throw stones.
9. Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him.
10. Virtue is her own reward.

III. Paragraphs

A sentence is a group of words which expresses a complete thought. A paragraph is a group of related sentences which develop a single topic. To be clear, a paragraph must be coherent in all its parts; the sentences must dovetail one another in meaning. To be emphatic, a paragraph must move to a definite end or climax.

Aims:

- (a) Select a topic sentence.
- (b) Hold firmly to the central thought, and avoid digressions.
- (c) Give each sentence a position commensurate with its importance and impressiveness.
- (d) Develop the topic logically, and preserve the natural sequence of thought.
- (e) Vary the sentence structure.
- (f) Bring the paragraph to an end which is as strategic and effective as its beginning.
- (g) Be economical in the use of words.
- (h) Make use of definite words of reference.
- (i) Use exact connectives.

Devices:

Develop the topic sentence

- (a) by repetition; (b) by giving particulars and details; (c) by giving specific instances or examples; (d) by comparison or contrast; (e) by antithesis; (f) by cause and effect; (g) by giving proofs; (h) by telling what a thing is not.

All writers of good prose employ these devices

and many writers, by combining two or more of them, give to their paragraphs variety, emphasis and grace.

EXERCISE I

Study the following paragraphs under these headings:

1. What devices are used in these paragraphs to make the meaning clear and emphatic?
2. Select sentences which are effective because of their construction.
3. Select words which are especially appropriate, and state why you consider them effective.
4. Find good opening and closing sentences, and explain to what element within them they owe their power.

A. *The Suggestive Power of Syllables*

I am afraid I am becoming an epicure in words, which is a bad thing to be, unless it is dominated by something infinitely better than itself. But there is a fascination in the mere sound of articulated breath: of consonants that resist with the firmness of a maid of honor, or half or wholly yield to the moving lips; of vowels that flow and murmur each after its kind; the peremptory B and P, the brittle K, the vibrating R, the insinuating S, the feathery F, the velvety V, the bell-voiced M, the tranquil broad A, the penetrating E, the cooing Oo, the emotional O, and the beautiful combinations of alternate rock and stream, as it were, that they give to the rippling flow of speech—there is a fascination in the skillful handling of these, which the great poets and even prose writers have not disdained to acknowledge and use to recommend their thought.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

B. *The Suggestive Power of Words*

For me words have color, character; they have faces, pouts, manners, gesticulations; they have moods, humors, eccentricities; they have tints, tones, personalities.

✓

✓

Because people cannot see the color of words, the tint of words, the secret ghostly motions of words:—

Because they cannot hear the whispering of words, the rustling of the procession of letters, the dream-flutes and dream-drums which are thinly and weirdly played by words:—

Because they cannot perceive the pouting of words, the frowning and fuming of words, the weeping, the raging and racketing of words:—

Because they are insensible to the phosphorescing of words, the fragrance of words, the noisomeness of words, the tenderness or hardness, the dryness or juiciness of words, —the interchange of values in the gold, the silver, and the copper of words:—

Is that any reason why we should not try to make them hear, to make them see, to make them feel? . . .

LAFCADIO HEARN

C. *The Emotional Power of Words*

The most powerful approach to the reader is always through that which stirs his emotions. Every word, therefore, which has an "emotion" quality has power as over against the word which is emotionally neutral. The emotion quality of a word may be slight, but wherever it exists at all, it is so much to the good. Note such "affect" words as "cocky;" "mooning;" "tears;" "sighèd;" etc. There are words that chuckle; words that laugh right out; words that weep; words that droop and falter. These are the words that grip the reader.

From *Influencing Human Behaviour* H. A. OVERSTREET

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W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.)

D. *Words and Their Uses*

Seek out "acceptable words"; and as ye seek them turn them to our English stores. Seeking to be rich in speech,

you will find that in the broad ocean of our English literature there are pearls of great price, our potent English words; words that are wizards more mighty than the old Scotch magician; words that are pictures bright and moving with all the coloring and circumstances of life; words that go down the century like battle cries; words that sob like litanies, sing like larks, shout like seas. Seek amid our exhaustless stores and you will find words that flash like stars of the frosty skies, or are melting and tender like Love's tear-filled eyes; words that are fresh and crisp like the mountain breeze in autumn, or are mellow and rich as an old painting; words that are sharp, unbending, and precise like Alpine needle-points, or are heavy and rugged like great nuggets of gold; words that are glittering and gay like imperial gems, or are chaste and refined like the face of a Muse. Search and ye shall find words that crush like the battle-axe of Richard, or like the scimitar of Saladin; words that sting like a serpent's fangs, or soothe like a mother's kiss; words that can unveil the nether depths of Hell, or point out the heavenly heights of purity and peace; words that can call a Judas; words that reveal the Christ. From *The Potency of English Words* JOHN S. McINTOSH

EXERCISE 2.

Examine each of the following paragraphs for (1) effective words, (2) variety of diction, (3) topic sentences, (4) types of sentence construction, (5) variety of sentences, (6) unity of thought, (7) sequence in thought development, (8) method of emphasis, (9) clarity of exposition:

A. *What is Style?*

This then is style. As technically manifested in Literature it is the power to touch with ease, grace, precision, any note in the gamut of human thought or emotion.

But essentially it resembles good manners. It comes of endeavouring to understand others, of thinking for them

rather than for yourself—of thinking, that is, with the heart as well as the head. It gives rather than receives; it is nobly careless of thanks or applause, not being fed by these but rather sustained and continually refreshed by an inward loyalty to the best. Yet, like “character” it has its altar within; to that retires for counsel, from that fetches its illumination, to ray outwards. Cultivate, Gentlemen, that habit of withdrawing to be advised by the best. “So,” says Fenelon, “you will find yourself infinitely quieter, your words will be fewer and more effectual; and while you make less ado, what you do will be more profitable”.

From *On the Art of Writing*

QUILLER-COUCH

(By permission of the publishers, Cambridge University Press.)

B. *Style is Personal*



While the many use language as they find it, the man of genius uses it indeed, but subjects it withal to his own purposes, and molds it according to his own peculiarities. The throng and succession of ideas, thoughts, feelings, imaginations, aspirations, which pass within him, the abstractions, the juxtapositions, the comparisons, the discriminations, the conceptions, which are so original in him, his views of external things, his judgments upon life, manners, and history, the exercise of his wit, of his humor, of his depth, of his sagacity, all these innumerable and incessant creations, the very pulsation and throbbing of his intellect, does he image forth, to all does he give utterance, in a corresponding language, which is as multiform as this inward mental action itself and analogous to it, the faithful expression of his intense personality, attending on his own inward world of thought as its very shadow: so that we might as well say that one man's shadow is another's as that the style of a really gifted mind can belong to any but himself. It follows him about *as* a shadow. His thought and feelings are personal, and so his language is personal.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

C. *How to Write Well*

To write well, then, an author must be in full possession of his subject; he must reflect on it enough to see clearly the order of his thoughts, and to put them in proper sequence—in a continuous chain, each of whose links represents a unified idea; and when he has taken up his pen, he must direct it successfully from one main point to the next, not letting it stray therefrom, nor yet allowing it to dwell immoderately on any, nor, in fact, giving it other movement than that determined by the space to be traversed. Herein consists the rigor of style; and herein lies that which gives it unity and regulates its speed. It is this, too, and this alone, which suffices to render a style precise and simple, even and clear, lively and coherent. If to obedience to this principle—a principle dictated by genius—an author joins delicacy and taste, caution in the choice of phraseology, care in the matter of expressing things only in the most general terms, his style will have positive nobility. If he has, further, a certain distrust of his first impulses, a contempt for what is superficially brilliant, and a steady aversion for what is equivocal and trifling, his style will be not simply grave, but even majestic. In fine, if he writes as he thinks, if he is himself convinced of what he wishes to prove, this good faith with himself, which is the foundation of propriety toward others and of sincerity in style, will make him accomplish his whole purpose; provided always that his inner conviction is not exprest with too violent enthusiasm, and that he shows throughout more candor than confidence and more light than heat.

BUFFON

D. *How to Become a Great Author*

He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he conceives vividly; he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its

parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief it is because few words suffice; when he is lavish of them, still each word has its mark, and aids, not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elocution. He expresses what all feel, but all cannot say; and his sayings pass into proverbs among his people and his phrases become household words and idioms of their daily speech, which is tessellated with the rich fragments of his language, as we see in foreign lands the marbles of Roman grandeur worked into the walls and pavements of modern palaces.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

E. *What is a Book?* ✓

A book is essentially not a talked thing, but a written thing, and written, not with a view of mere communication, but of permanence. The book of talk is printed only because its author cannot speak to thousands of people at once; if he could, he would; the volume is mere multiplication of his voice. You cannot talk to your friend in India[†]; if you could, you would; you write instead: that is mere conveyance of voice. But a book is written, not to multiply the voice merely, not to carry it merely, but to perpetuate it. The author has something to say which he perceives to be true and useful, or helpfully beautiful. So far as he knows, no one else can say it. He is bound to say it, clearly and melodiously if he may; clearly, at all events. In the sum of his life he finds this to be the thing, or group of things, manifest to him;—this, the piece of true knowledge, or sight, which his share of sunshine and earth has permitted him to seize. He would fain set it down for ever; engrave it on rock, if he could; saying, “This is the best of me; for the rest, I ate, and drank, and slept, loved,

and hated, like another; my life was as the vapour, and is not; but this I saw and knew; this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory." That is his "writing", it is, in his small human way, and with whatever degree of true inspiration is in him, his inscription, or scripture. That is a "Book".
 († This was written in 1865.) JOHN RUSKIN

F. *How to Read Great Books*

The method I should advise in reading great books is a simple one. I should try, first of all, not to be awed by their greatness. Then I should read without any other preparation than life has given me—I should open the pages and find out how much they mean to me. If I found my experience reflected in some parts of the book and not in others, I shouldn't worry about those blind spots. They may be the fault of the book in those places—it may be out of date. But it is more prudent of me to suppose, what is just as likely, that my own experience is perhaps a little thin in the regions those parts of the book dealt with. To find out which is so, I should read the book a second time, and a third. Whether or not the repeated readings clear up the difficult pages, they will show me new meanings in the part I already understand. When we encounter these dead spots in books supposed to be masterpieces, and when we are humble enough to explain them by some insufficiency in ourselves, the impulse is to go for help to other books, to works of criticism. It is much more profitable to go directly to life.

It is advisable to sample as many of the great books as we can, for the first ones we come to may not be those which reflect us most completely. But once we have found our author, we have only to read him over and over, and after a while to read out from him, into the authors who seem kindred spirits. When the reader has found himself in two great authors, he is fairly launched. But the books should be read over and over. Until we have discovered that

certain books grow with our maturing experience and others do not, we have not learned how to distinguish a great book from a book.

From *The Delight of Great Books* JOHN ERSKINE

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The Bobbs-Merrill Company.)

G. *What is a Ballad?*

A ballad is a song that tells a story, or—to take another point of view—a story told in song. More formally, it may be defined as a short narrative poem, adapted for singing, simple in plot and metrical structure, divided into stanzas, and characterized by complete impersonality so far as the author or singer is concerned. This last trait is of the very first consequence in determining the quality or qualities which give the ballad its peculiar place in literature. A ballad has no author. At all events it appears to have none. The teller of the story for the time being is as much the author as the unknown (and for our purposes unimportant) person who first put it into shape. In most forms of artistic literature the personality of the writer is a matter of deep concern to the reader. The style, we say, is the man. The individuality of one poet distinguishes his works, however they may vary among themselves, from the works of all other poets. Chaucer, for instance, has his way, or his ways, of telling a tale that are not the way, or the ways, of William Morris. If a would-be creative literary artist has no individuality that we can detect, we set him down as conventional, and that is an end of him and of his works. In the ballad it is not so. There the author is of no account. He is not even present. We do not feel sure he ever existed. At most, we merely infer his existence, at some indefinite time in the past, from the fact of his product: a poem, we think, implies a poet; therefore, somebody must have composed this ballad. Until we begin to reason, we have no thought of the author of any ballad, because, so far as we

can see, he has no thought of himself.

From *English and Scottish Ballads*

KITTREDGE

(By permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.)

H. *What is Poetry?*

Poetry is that fine particle within us that expands, rarefies, refines, raises our whole being; without it "man's life is as poor as a beast's". Man is a poetical animal; and those of us who do not study principles of poetry act upon them all our lives, like Molière's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme", who has always spoken prose without knowing it. The child is a poet, in fact, when he first plays at hide-and-seek, or repeats the story of Jack the Giant-killer; the shepherd-boy is a poet when he first crowns his mistress with a garland of flowers; the countryman when he stops to look at the rainbow; the city apprentice when he gazes after the Lord Mayor's Show; the miser when he hugs his gold; the courtier who builds his hopes upon a smile; the savage who paints his idol with blood; the slave who worships a tyrant or the tyrant who fancies himself a god—the vain, the ambitious, the proud, the cholerick man, the hero and the coward, the beggar, the king, all who live in a world of their own making; and the poet does no more than describe what all the others think and act.

HAZLITT

EXERCISE 3

What are the merits of the following expositions? In which are the devices appropriate to the subject? Can you find defects in any of these paragraphs?

A. *What is it to be a Gentleman?* ✓

What is it to be a gentleman? Is it to have lofty aims, to lead a pure life, to keep your honour virgin; to have the esteem of your fellow-citizens, and the love of your fireside; to bear good fortune meekly; to suffer evil with constancy;

and through evil or good to maintain truth always? Show me the happy man whose life exhibits these qualities, and him we will salute as gentleman, whatever his rank may be.

THACKERAY

B. *What a Piece of Work is a Man!*

What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form, in moving, how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? From *Hamlet*

SHAKESPEARE

C. *What is a Liberal Education?*

That man, I think, has had a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold, logic engine, with all its parts of equal strength, and in smooth working order; ready, like a steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of Nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to heel by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of Nature, or of art, to hate all vileness, and to respect others as himself.

THOMAS HENRY HUXLEY

D. *What is Capital?*

It has been seen in the preceding chapters that besides the primary and universal requisites of production, labor and natural agents, there is another requisite without which no productive operations beyond the rude and scanty beginnings of primitive industry, are possible; namely, a stock,

previously accumulated, of the products of former labor. This accumulated stock of the produce of labor is termed Capital. The function of Capital in production, it is of the utmost importance thoroughly to understand, since a number of the erroneous notions with which our subject is invested, originate in an imperfect and confused apprehension on this point.

JOHN STUART MILL

(By permission of the publishers, Longmans, Green & Company.)

E. *The Menace of the Movies* ✓

Good God, what has the film done, from the beginning of its infantile career, but imitate the faults of the theatre? Has it set out to create its own conventions? Not at all. It has borrowed, borrowed, borrowed—and always borrowed trash. All the outworn gestures of the stage appear before us, like so many threadbare garments, waving on the screen. The stage is over emphatic; the screen is melodramatic. The stage is romantic; the screen is preposterous. The stage exploits the private personality of its players; the screen becomes a positive welter of exhibitionism. The stage leaves little enough to the imagination; but the screen will not allow us even to imagine a man going upstairs without showing a picture of him in the act. The stage is conscious of the dull-witted thousands to whom it must appeal; the screen is haunted by the dread of stupid millions. The stage seeks the greatest common measure of intelligence; the screen goes straight for the lowest common denominator. The stage is timid; the screen is hysterical. The stage is compromising; the screen is cowardly. The stage is commercial, tawdry, vain; the screen is sordid, vulgar, arrogant. . . .

From *The World to Play With*

ASHLEY DUKES

(By permission of the publishers, Oxford University Press.)

F. *The Stone-Boat*

The stone-boat is a peculiar vehicle incidental to America, and has nothing whatsoever to do with the water. It resembles a huge metal tray or shovel hauled by a team of horses. And its special path is as novel as the boat itself. It is only two wooden lines fashioned from tree-logs adzed roughly flat on the upper side, well greased, and laid promiscuously and roughly parallel on the ground. The stone is prized and levered on to the tray, and hauled with a speed, which, bearing in mind the primitive road, is astonishing, to the dump where a sharp swing round on the part of the horses pitches the mass down the bank. F. A. TALBOT
From *The Making of a Great Canadian Railway*

G. *Circulation of the Blood*

The blood circulates within a system of closed tubes by means of the alternate contraction and relaxation of the heart. The heart is a hollow muscular organ, four chambers, two auricles and two ventricles arranged in pairs, a ventricle and an auricle communicating on each side, which, however, do not communicate directly with auricle and ventricle on other side. The blood is conveyed away from the left side of the heart by the arteries and returned to right side by the veins, the arteries and veins being continuous with each other on one end by means of the heart, and on the other end by a fine network of vessels—the capillaries. From the right ventricle the blood passes through the pulmonary artery to the lungs to be purified, then after passing through the pulmonary capillaries and veins it passes through the pulmonary vein to the left ventricle, from whence it is pumped through the aorta to all parts of the body. The normal sounds of the heart have been likened to that expressed by “lubb-dup.” The first part, “lubb,” occurs when blood is pumped out of the heart through the pulmonary artery and aorta to the lungs and body respectively. The second sound, “dup,” occurs when

the heart expands to receive the blood from body and lungs.
 From *Physical Training* J. W. BARTON

H. *The Boy*

Here is a boy that loves to run, swim, kick football, turn somersets, make faces, whittle, fish, tear his clothes, coast, skate, fire crackers, blow squash "tooters," cut his name on fences, read about Robinson Crusoe and Sinbad the Sailor, eat the widest-angled slices of pie and untold cakes and candies, crack nuts with his back teeth and bite out the better part of another boy's apple with his front ones, turn up coppers, "stick" knives, call names, throw stones, knock off hats, set mousetraps, chalk doorsteps, "cut behind" anything on wheels or runners, whistle through his teeth, "holler" Fire! on slight evidence, run after soldiers, patronize an engine-company, or, in his own words, "blow for tub No. 11," or whatever it may be;—isn't that a pretty nice sort of a boy, though he has not got anything the matter with him that takes the taste of this world out?

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES
 From *The Professor at the Breakfast Table*

I. *Moss*

Unfading as motionless, the worm frets them not, and the autumn wastes not. Strong in lowliness, they neither blanch in heat nor pine in frost. To them, slow-fingered, constant-hearted, is entrusted the weaving of the dark, eternal tapestries of the hills; to them, slow-pencilled, iris-dyed, the tender framing of their endless imagery. Sharing the stillness of the impassioned rock, they share also its endurance; and while the winds of departing spring scatter the white hawthorn blossom like drifted snow, and summer dims on the parched meadow the drooping of its cowslip-gold—far above, among the mountains, the silver lichen spots rest, star-like, on the stone; and the gathering orange

stain upon the edge of yonder western peak reflects the sunsets of a thousand years.

From *Mosses*

JOHN RUSKIN ✓

J.

I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanours. I impeach him in the name of the Commons and House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honour he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under-foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all.

EDMUND BURKE

K.

For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upward, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libration and frequent weighing of his wings; till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learned music and motion from an angel as he passed sometimes through the air about his ministries here below: so is the prayer of a good man.

JEREMY TAYLOR

L.

John Thelwall thought it very unfair to influence a child's mind by inculcating any opinions before it should have come to years of discretion, and be able to choose for itself. I showed him my garden, and told him it was my botanical garden. "How so?" said he, "it is covered with

weeds." "Oh," I replied, "*that* is only because it has not yet come to its age of discretion and choice. The weeds, you see, have taken the liberty to grow, and I thought it unfair in me to prejudice the soil towards roses and strawberries."

S. T. COLERIDGE

M.

The proposition is peace. Not peace through the medium of war; not peace to be hunted through the labyrinth of intricate and endless negotiations; not peace to arise out of universal discord, fomented from principle, in all parts of the empire; not peace to depend on the juridical determination of perplexing questions, or the precise marking the shadowy boundaries of a complex government. It is simple peace; sought in its natural course, and in its ordinary haunts. It is peace sought in the spirit of peace; and laid in principles purely pacific. I propose by removing the ground of the difference, and by restoring the former unsuspecting confidence of the colonies in the mother country, to give permanent satisfaction to your people; and (far from a scheme of ruling by discord) to reconcile them to each other in the same act, and by the bond of the very same interest which reconciles them to British government.

EDMUND BURKE

From *Speech on Conciliation with the American Colonies*

EXERCISE 4

Analysis of Paragraph C, *What is a Liberal Education?* in EXERCISE 3. (See page 54.)

1. How many sentences are there in this paragraph?
2. What use does the writer make of semicolons?
3. The thought is compact. Why is it not obscure?
4. Show that the thought structure is logical.
5. By what concrete images or figures of speech has the writer presented vividly to the reader the nature and

function of the body, the intellect, the mind, and the passions?

6. Trace the connection of all relative pronouns.
7. Select phrases to prove that the writer's powers of observation are alert and accurate and that his power of imagination is clear and strong.
8. If his style is the result of clear, rich and vigorous thinking, to what other qualities does it owe its sincerity?
9. Of the 164 words in this paragraph, how many are verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs?
10. Read the paragraph aloud and listen to the rhythm. This passage should be committed to memory.

Analyse similarly paragraphs B, D, E and H in EXERCISE 2, or A, D, E and G, in EXERCISE 3.

EXERCISE 5

Criticize the following passages under these headings: diction; sentence structure; sentence variety; unity, coherence and emphasis in paragraph; clearness and interest. How would you improve any one of them?

A. *The Crawl Stroke*

In the crawl stroke the swimmer lies face downward in the water. He extends his arm forward and parallel with the surface and then draws it firmly downward and backward, his fingers pressed together, until his arm is again parallel with the surface. He extends his other arm, at this point, and goes through the same motions as described before, so that, when one arm is at the end of its stroke the other is just at the beginning. At the same time that his arms are going through these motions, his legs are making short kicks from the hips, the knees being kept stiff. In actual practice, in the "flutter kick", the knees may be bent a little. The face is kept under water for three strokes and

at every fourth one the head is turned and air is taken in by the mouth. Breathing out is accomplished slowly during the three "under-water" strokes, through the nose.

Student's Theme

B. *How to Skin a Fur-bearer*

There are two methods of taking the pelt from an animal, by open and by cased skinning. The open method is used with the larger animals, and the cased method with the smaller ones.

If one has caught a beaver, it is skinned by the open method. The animal is placed on its back, with its tail toward you. A long slit is made from the base of the tail to the front of the jaw, up the centre of the body. The skin is worked back by means of the fingers until it is all off the body. The pelt is then slit up the inner side of the legs as far as possible, and the pelt is pulled away from the legs until one reaches the toes and claws. The bone and sinew is cut here, and the skin is now off the body and legs. If the tail is to be retained, the bone can be easily removed. The beaver tail is discarded because of its lack of fur. The skin is worked, by the fingers, from the neck until the head is reached. Cutting the base of the ears from the skull, pull the skin over the head down to the tip of the nose, where it is cut off. It is then stretched out to dry.

All animals like the muskrat, mink, weasel and martin, are skinned by the cased method. The animal is usually hung up by the hind legs to a branch of a tree. Starting as far out as possible on the inner side of the hind leg, cut up the leg, across the base of the tail, and down the other leg to the end. The same is done with the front legs. The tail bone is pulled out, and the body is pulled backwards through and out the leg slits, just as one would pull one's hand from a glove. If the skin sticks here and there, a light cut with the knife will loosen it. It is not a common practice to retain the head, and it is usually cut off at the

neck. When the skin is taken off, it will be inside out. A springy piece of wire, U shaped, is inserted, on which the skin is stretched and dried.

An expert takes only a few minutes for the skinning operation, because he has no time to waste on the trapline, and he does not want to carry a heavy load of dead animals.
Student's Theme

C. *How to Clean a Flounder*

The flounder is a flat, broad fish, about twelve inches long, ten in width and one inch in thickness. It is caught in salt water about one foot from the bottom. On account of their flat shape, these fish are always filleted.

First, the head and tail are neatly chopped off. Then, with a sharp knife or scraper, remove some of the scales from the upper surface by scraping from the tail towards the head. This operation is quickened by scraping the fish submerged in warm water. It is not necessary to remove all the scales, because the skin will later be discarded. The fins on the side of the fish are now cut off along with enough of the flesh to leave small holes in the skin. With the fingers enlarge these holes and draw forth the internal organs. Now the fish is ready to be skinned. Firmly grasp the loose ends of the flesh near the neck and, with a rapid, jerking, downward motion, remove in one piece all the skin on one side of the fish. The skin on the other side may be removed in the same way.

Now you have left the white meat held together by the backbone and ribs. The bones can be easily removed by gently and gradually easing one end of the backbone away from the meat. Since all the bones are fused into one simple framework, this is a simple operation and, when the backbone is out, every bone is out.

The meat is naturally divided into two parts or halves, so it is only necessary to trim off the uneven edges. Wash the fillets, roll them in flour, and they are ready to be

cooked. The average fillet is a pure white, scaly piece of meat about the size of a man's hand. When fried to a tempting brown, and flavoured with vinegar, these fillets rival the best brook trout and are often served as a delicacy in many fashionable resorts, only under fancy names which may mean anything.

Student's Theme

D. *What I Intend To Be* ✓

I intend to be a mechanical engineer. In this brief statement, I have summarized the results of my deliberations in years past and stated the trend of my ambitions for the years to come.

Ever since I can remember, my interests have leaned towards the sciences in general and mechanics in particular. Even now, late on in high school, I am weak in languages, but strong in mathematics and the sciences. I believe that I come by my inclinations naturally, for my grandfather has designed and built many machines for his own use, and two of my uncles are graduate engineers.

In choosing my friends and my books, I have been influenced by the same feelings. There is nothing I like better than a discussion on some new invention or machine. I am a regular reader of many mechanical and scientific publications which make me poor in pocket but rich in ideas.

Thus, by being mindful of the past and by expressing faith in the future, I consider that in choosing some branch of mechanical engineering I have selected a life work which will afford opportunities unlimited.

Student's Theme

EXERCISE 6

In the following passage, the sentence order of a sound paragraph from Macaulay's "Essay on Clive" has been jumbled. Reconstruct and rewrite it, and then read aloud

both the jumbled and the ordered version. In how many ways may the two passages be contrasted?

1. There was then general peace in Europe. 2. The East India Company thanked him for his services in the warmest terms, and bestowed on him a sword set with diamonds. 3. Almost immediately after the marriage, Clive embarked with his bride for England. 4. The Carnatic was the only part of the world where the English and French were in arms against each other. 5. The young captain was known at the India House by the honourable nickname of General Clive, and was toasted by that appellation at the feasts of the Directors. 6. He returned a very different person from the poor slighted boy who had been sent out ten years before to seek his fortune. 7. The vast schemes of Dupleix had excited no small uneasiness in the city of London; and the rapid turn of fortune, which was chiefly owing to the courage and talents of Clive, had been hailed with great delight. 8. He was only twenty-seven; yet his country already respected him as one of her first soldiers. 9. With rare delicacy, he refused to receive this token of gratitude unless a similar compliment were paid to his friend and commander, Lawrence. 10. On his arrival in England, he found himself an object of general interest and admiration.

Part of the duty of lawyers, policemen, preachers, doctors, engineers and teachers, is to explain terms, rules, principles, beliefs, conceptions, processes, machines, objects and institutions. Any one of us may, at any time, be asked to explain something to someone else. We should aim at simplicity and brevity, but above everything else, we should try to be unmistakably clear. On some of the subjects which follow you might write thousands of words. Choose rather to write briefly on that angle or phase of a subject which will interest your chosen reader.

What angle of the Feudal System would you explain to a romantic classmate, a landlord, a socialist, the mayor of a town, a building contractor, a clergyman, or the manager of a chain store? Before beginning to write, you should select some central idea or controlling purpose, and around it organize your thoughts. The short essay requires no introduction or conclusion, but it must have unity and form, *i.e.* beginning, middle and end, and an original title.

SUBJECTS FOR EXPLANATION

I.

- | | |
|---|--|
| How to make a class room attractive. | How to organize a hike. |
| How to get most value from a day's activities. | How to take pictures. |
| How to keep fit. | How to make up for a character part in a play. |
| How to trim a hat. | How to commit a sonnet to memory. |
| How to get along with people. | How to "sell" the school magazine. |
| How to write an essay. | How to plan a birthday party. |
| What are the interesting features of social life in a small town? | How to do Christmas shopping. |

II.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| How to close camp for the winter. | How to build a camp fire. |
| How to lay out a flower garden. | How to give first aid. |
| What causes a tornado? | How to grow roses. |
| How to fumigate a house. | How to make a living room attractive. |
| How to decorate a frame house. | How Sunday is spent in town or country. |
| How to teach a dog tricks. | How to budget your allowance. |

How to detect the tricks of fakirs.

How to pack a trunk.

How to give a tourist directions to a given place.

How to improve the memory.

How to make angel cake.

How to audit the accounts of a club.

How to use a dictionary.

How to be neighbourly.

How to open a bank account.

III.

How to conduct an experiment in the science laboratory.

Explain the process of lithography.

How Neon signs are made.

How to build a ship model.

How to mix paints.

How colour photographs are made.

How imitation silk is made.

Explain acceleration due to gravity.

How to use a slide rule.

How to build an airplane model.

How streets are paved.

How to develop a film.

How to make an electric bell.

How coke is made.

IV. Explain the operation of one of the following:

A rock drill.

A talking picture machine.

A fourteen-stroke radial engine.

A cash register.

A speedometer.

A pulley.

A fanning mill.

A blow torch.

The cylinder action of a four-cycle gasoline engine.

A time clock.

A stop watch.

A linotype machine.

A hay-fork.

An electric refrigerator.

V. For longer themes to be written at home:

Why I go to school.

Fish I have caught.

The industrial uses of electricity.

My favourite character in fiction.

How not to ski.

The newspaper as an agency

| | |
|---|--|
| How to read a book with profit. | of peace and uplift. |
| How to concentrate. | How to play auction bridge. |
| On being without money. | My favourite radio programme. |
| How to estimate a tennis player's ability. | Castles in Spain. |
| The effects of responsibility upon character. | The advantages of a particular type of automobile. |
| | My pet aversion, or how to disturb me. |

EXERCISE 8

By means of the most appropriate literary device, explain the difference in meaning between the words in the following groups:

knowledge and scholarship; liberty and licence; broad-mindedness and spinelessness; realism and romanticism; a practical joke and a "mean trick"; labour and capital; fickleness and foolishness; recreation and athletics.

EXERCISE 9

1. Explain how the shape of the oak leaf differs from that of the chestnut, the willow leaf from that of the elm, or the apple leaf from that of the pear.

2. Distinguish between the bloom of the dahlia and that of the peony, the bloom of the dandelion and that of the daisy, or the bloom of the daffodil and that of the tulip.

3. Distinguish between the fragrance of the cherry blossom and that of the plum blossom, the appearance of a ripe tomato and that of a ripe apple, or the appearance of a full grown pumpkin and that of a squash.

EXERCISE 10

Write an essay on "My Choice of a Profession". The following outline may be suggestive:

1. What I intend to do or expect to be in life.
2. The reason for my choice.

3. My preparation to attain this objective.
 - (a) Interests or hobbies.
 - (b) Reading.
 - (c) Friendships.
 - (d) Travel.
4. The ends to which I hope to direct my efforts in later life.

Symbols for Corrections

- /, Comma required (Indicate similarly other marks of punctuation.)
- ∂ Omit
- Circle around misspelled word
- G Grammar
- W Use of word questioned
- D Diction
- K Awkward
- X Lack of agreement
- T Wrong tense
- S Faulty sentence structure
- ¶ Paragraph
- ^ Word or phrase omitted
- ? Is this fact correct?

CUE Paragraph lacks Coherence, Unity and Emphasis.

No more would I tell a green writer all his faults,
lest I should make him grieve and faint, and at last
despair.

BEN JONSON

V

SELF CRITICISM

A good writer is simply one who says all he means to say, who says only what he means to say, and who says it exactly as he means to say it. BRUNETIÈRE

BEFORE handing in your essay, apply the following tests:

1. Words:

- (a) Is every word in good English usage?
- (b) Is it appropriate to the sense?
- (c) Is this the language of the people?
- (d) Is every word natural? Trust your instinct.
- (e) Does it express neither more nor less than you intend?
- (f) Is it in the correct grammatical form?
- (g) Are all the prepositions and relative pronouns in the best form and position?
- (h) Are the verbs weak or strong? Are they correct in tense?
- (i) Are the nouns accurate and clear?
- (j) Is every adjective and adverb necessary to make the meaning clear? Cross out all but the essential words.
- (k) Are there any unpleasant repetitions of words or sounds?

2. Sentences:

- (a) Are the phrases and clauses in their right positions?
- (b) Are all the modifiers near the words or ideas they modify?
- (c) Is every sentence well balanced, or are verbs too near the beginning or end?
- (d) Is the same sentence structure used too often?
- (e) Does the sentence read rhythmically or jerkily?
- (f) Is there coherence in thought and easy transition from one sentence to another?
- (g) Are any of the phrases sufficiently original to win the sympathy of your reader?
- (h) Are any of the phrases so trite or hackneyed or slangy that they are likely to offend your reader?
- (i) Are there any dangling or unrelated participles?

3. Paragraphs:

- (a) Does each paragraph deal with only one subject or one phase of a subject?
- (b) Is it a unit in itself, with beginning, middle and end and, when appropriate, a climax?
- (c) Is the coherence between paragraphs distinctly marked?
- (d) Is each paragraph an essential part of the whole essay?

4. Punctuation:

Are all the semi-colons and commas correctly used? Too many commas delay the reader.

Use them only where necessary to make the meaning clear.

5. The Whole Essay:

- (a) Read your essay aloud to a friend or, better, have a friend read it aloud to you. Is it smooth, pleasing and rhythmic?
- (b) Have you said all you intended to say clearly and attractively?
- (c) Does the opening sentence arrest the attention?
- (d) Is the last sentence the natural end of the thought?
- (e) Is this the best thinking and writing you can do?
- (f) Have you been honest and sincere in every respect?

Lest you should think these tests too rigid, consider the following catechism of Sir Basil Clarke, Managing Director of Editorial Services, Limited, London:

Good writing, in by far its major part, boils down to two questions—clear thinking, followed by clear and simple expression.

A writer should test every sentence he writes, then every paragraph, then his article as a whole, by these simple tests:

- (a) Is that exactly what I meant to say—neither more nor less?
- (b) Could any man, wise man, fool, or knave, construe that sentence to mean anything different from what I meant to say—either more or less?
- (c) Could I (the writer) whether by choice of words, or by arrangement, or by any other means, have expressed that thought or fact more simply—

thereby making it more easy for the reader to understand?

- (*d*) Could I (the writer) have expressed that thought or fact more graphically or vividly—thereby making a deeper impression on the reader's mind?

Tests (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) are vital. A writer has not the elements of his craft till his sentences, paragraphs and articles satisfy these basic tests. In Test (*d*), the taste, artistry and temperament of the writer come into play, and in such matters writers are bound to differ. But about these tests (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*), there can be little or no question of taste. It is solely one of hard fact.

To modify all this, read the following advice to young writers:

Young writers may learn something of the secrets of Economy by careful revision of their own compositions, and by careful dissection of passages selected both from good and bad writers. They have simply to strike out every word, every clause, and every sentence, the removal of which will not carry away any of the constituent elements of the thought. Having done this, let them compare the revised with the unrevised passages, and see where the excision has improved, and where it has injured, the effect. For Economy, although a primal law, is not the only law of Style. It is subject to various limitations from the pressure of other laws; and thus the removal of a trifling superfluity will not be justified by a wise economy if that loss entails a dissonance, or prevents a climax, or robs the expression of its ease and variety. Economy is rejection of whatever is superfluous; it is not Miserliness. A liberal expenditure is often the best economy, and is always so when dictated by a generous impulse, not by a prodigal carelessness or ostentatious vanity. That man would greatly err who tried to make his style effective by stripping

it of all redundancy and ornament, presenting it naked before the indifferent public. GEORGE HENRY LEWES

From *The Principles of Success in Literature*

“The art of expression is the basis as well as the medium of the best culture,” wrote W. H. Page. Neither scholarship nor good reading alone will make a good writer. Practice—regular and persistent practice, is necessary. On this subject Paderewski once said, “If I go one day without practising at the piano, I notice it in my playing. If I go two days, my friends notice it. If I go three days, the audience notices it.”

EXERCISE

Criticize the following, explain each mistake, and justify your corrections:

1. O'er the hill we wend our homeward way as the sun begins to wane. 2. Due to our excessive speed, we didn't stop. 3. As I have gotten high marks, I am not liable to fail. 4. We feel sad about them leaving us. 5. I waited on my friend who was to a store on the corner. 6. It began to rain, so, with a quickening pace, he hurried on to the house in the further end of the street. 7. He fell off the sleigh, and we brushed the snow off of him. 8. She went onto the platform, and we stepped out onto the street. 9. Everybody must show their ticket. 10. He looked at me like my father does when I am not doing good at my work. 12. The meal finished and feeling much better, I started out. 13. I will give you an example where if this was carried out you would succeed. 14. I cannot but help feel sorry for him. 15. This house is not different than that. 16. I will loan you this book, if you will promise to further attempt to enjoy it. 17. She went to her aunt's in the next village six miles up the river in a car this forenoon.

VI

HOW TO WRITE A BOOK REVIEW

THERE are two kinds of book review: the long authoritative review which, at its best, is good literary criticism and a creative art; and the very short, tabloid review which is little better than an advertisement. The only merit of the latter lies in its epigrammatic phrases. Our concern is with the former type, which takes into account not only the book and its author, but the reviewer himself and his readers.

Aims of the reviewer:

1. To give the reader some idea of the content of the book by one or more of the following methods:
 - (a) A plan or an outline of the book.
 - (b) A summary of the main ideas in the book.
 - (c) The author's purpose and how far it has been realized.
 - (d) How much the book tells you about what you wish to know on this subject.
2. To evaluate and criticize the author's method and his style in one or more of the following ways:
 - (a) Rank the book among other books by the same author.
 - (b) Compare it with a similar one by a predecessor or a contemporary.

- (c) Show whether any of the author's qualifications or opinions bear significantly upon the book.
 - (d) Show the relation between the ideas in the book and the opinions in vogue at the time of its writing.
 - (e) Estimate the author's ability to interpret life and nature without prejudice.
 - (f) Show in what respects the style attracts or repels the reader.
3. To write a review which in form and effect is as complete as a lyric poem:
- (a) Withhold the writing of the review until your reactions to the book have crystallized into a single dominant impression.
 - (b) Organize your thoughts and plan your review before you begin to write.
 - (c) Strike the keynote of your criticism in the opening sentence, but do not let the reader guess the chief effect that you have prepared to give him in the closing sentence.
 - (d) Substantiate your critical comments by one or two apt quotations from the book.
 - (e) Sum up the content in one or two sentences, but do not garble your report.
 - (f) Coin a few telling phrases or epigrammatic statements, but avoid novelty or smartness.
 - (g) Reserve your praise or blame until the end. A famous reviewer in *The Edinburgh Quarterly* began with "This will never do!" but that brand of criticism has been out of date for nearly a century.

Whether you praise or blame the book, state your reasons for doing so.

- (h) Give a tone of finality to the review by bringing it to a natural and thought-provoking climax.

EXERCISE 1

In the light of the analysis given above, estimate the merits of the following book review:

A. *LIBERTY* by E. D. Martin

Liberty deserves a place beside Walter Lippman's *Preface to Morals* on the shelf where we keep good books. It is really a history of the idea of liberty in the Western World, a history based on full knowledge of the long struggle to achieve liberty, of the different forms it took in different ages, and of the peril that threatens it today. Mr. Martin's point of view is, in the main, that of John Stuart Mill, as the definition shows, "people have liberty when on the whole they are intelligent enough to create a social order in which both the individual citizen and the Government mind their own business and refrain from meddling with others in matters which concern only themselves".

Liberty is something more than a brilliantly written and wonderfully interesting book; it is a manual of guidance to clear thinking about the major problems of modern civilization in which the tyranny of the majority, as Mill foresaw, is beginning to smother the flame of man's hard-won freedom. Here is a book to read and re-read, and consult about the principles that should determine public policy.

J. F. MACDONALD, for the Eaton Book Club

EXERCISE 2

Estimate the worth of the following book reviews. Which is the best and which is the worst? Give reasons for your selection. Comment on their literary style.

B. *BAWBEE JOCK* by Amy McLaren

The refreshing charm of this delightful novel offers a singular appeal to those who appreciate a wholesome story of romance and sacrifice. A testimony to the widespread popularity which it has enjoyed is borne out by the fact that it now appears in its majority edition.

While the scenes are set amidst the rugged and towering grandeur of the Scottish Highlands, the intensely human character of the plot lends a breadth of appeal, which is not restricted by mere geographical boundaries. Miss McLaren has the happy faculty of being able to portray character with lifelike vividness, and, at the same time, weave round her characters a wealth of typically Scottish legend and custom.

C. *MISS PINKERTON* by Mary Roberts Rinehart

When Mrs. Rinehart in *Lost Ecstasy* tried to do a heavyweight novel, I regretted her desertion of the farce and the detective yarn, in both of which she had done well. With *Miss Pinkerton* she has returned to crime, for which her admirers can be thankful. This murder story is cleverly worked out along lines fundamentally standard; and yet she gives the action a picturesque touch of her own and the characters a welcome naturalness. Having been a nurse herself, she succeeds admirably with her lady detective who watches by the sick bed. In her 42nd volume, Mrs. Rinehart is back on the right track.

D. *NO OTHER TIGER* by A. E. W. Mason

When in the Secret Service, Mr. Mason must have had wild and marvellous adventures himself, in outlying parts of the world. He knows the earth, and he knows the world of men and women and the structure of society. He can mingle the Occident with the Orient. He can draw diverse characters. His pen is alert and bold. He is interested in words. He can keep a sentence together. His plot has

genuine novelty. His solution is at once convincing and startling. . . . When I finished "No Other Tiger" I took breath and said to myself: "This time you have not been let down."

ARNOLD BENNETT in *The Evening Standard*

E. *THE GOOD COMPANIONS* by J. B. Priestley

The modern novel is often a slim and sour affair; Mr. Priestley is for jollity and stoutness together. Like Falstaff, he admires bulk, and big assemblance, and as a novelist he lavishly fashions his fact to suit his generous fancy. So he writes on the vast Victorian scale, makes all England his camping ground, and recruits his company from the various corners of the social scene.

We have read as much as an average novel before he has them together on parade. A carpenter from Yorkshire, a "county" lady from the Cotswolds, and a runaway school-master are chance truants from home and duty, whom accident flings together with a concert party, and then we follow their adventures in an errant life of "fit-up" vaudeville. Mr. Priestley never fishes very deep, but he casts very wide and nets in a whole shoal of odd fish, so that his novel is a kind of pierrot's picaresque, in which anyone may turn up and join the strolling playboys provided that he adds to the fun of the fair. The descriptions of the persons may be too fantastical for the realist, but the landscape is extraordinarily vivid. You jump straight into the heart of Yorkshire for a start and see how the queer muddle that is England works and plays and takes its troubles.

This is England seen by eyes with a light in them, and recorded by a hand that holds the pen as the proper ally of pipe and pint-pot. It was an act of immense courage to start out on this huge mountain of narrative, but many will climb gladly after the pioneer who has always some breath left for laughter and fresh appetite for inventing escapade.

IVOR BROWN in *The Manchester Guardian*

F. *ROUGH JUSTICE* by C. E. Montague

The War is not the whole of Mr. Montague's book and, when it occurs, takes a different, rather more melodramatic position. Mr. Montague has shed many of the more extravagant excesses of his style and writes now in a very straightforward manner. But the children with whom the first part of his story is mainly concerned are not altogether easy to believe in. It is hard to believe that the recorded sayings of the infant Bron were ever uttered by one single infant. It is possible to accept his habitual good-night remark of "Fun to-morrow!" but his alleged exclamation on seeing daffodils, "Lamps of blooty!" strikes a false note which is struck not infrequently throughout these early chapters. And his father, that high-minded politician, Thomas Garth, a Sir Galahad born out of his due time into a Conservative Cabinet is in much the same key of falsity. It is one thing to have ideals of conduct and imagination; it is another, and a much more difficult thing, to embody them in characters of fiction. Mr. Montague has tried and failed.

The book has other defects. One character wanders unexpectedly in and casually out by way of being killed in France, after leading the reader to expect that he will play some part in the structure of the story. The War indeed gives Mr. Montague too great a facility for getting rid of characters at a blow; it is its great danger for all writers of fiction. But the growth of Bron, when his baby days and his baby sayings are over, is depicted very feelingly and his relations with his father are well shown. The episode of Victor, shot for desertion, provides the melodrama. Claude and Colin, competing for decorations (I think we have met them before in pages by Mr. Montague) provide the light comedy. Beyond this there are many passages of admirable description, but, in taming his style (a process desirable in itself) Mr. Montague seems to have lost his faculty of telling a story so as to make a point.

EDWARD SHANKS in *The London Mercury*

G. IT'S ALL SO EASY

The most interesting fact about this book is contained in the various prospectuses that accompany the volume, in which we are informed that in the United States "over 50,000 copies have already been sold at \$5 each. *The Story of Mankind* has now displaced Well's *Outline of History* as the best selling non-fiction book in America." This is perhaps, not surprising, as Mr. Wells, with all his faults, was serious, and did not write down to his audience beyond a certain point. To read *The Outline of History* needs an appreciable amount of mental effort, so that Mr. Van Loon was well advised to come forward with a version that should need absolutely none. He has certainly succeeded in his futile task and deserves all the money he may get, as he has prepared a concoction made of everything thrown away after the nutritious elements have been extracted. These remnants are called *The Story of Mankind*, and we are informed that they are singularly suitable for children's diet. As a matter of fact, *The Story of Mankind* is not written for children at all, but for grown-ups with inadequately developed intelligence. Intelligent children like things cut and dried, with fact following fact in pitiless and logical sequence. The moment the form of a book becomes flabby and shapeless we know it is primarily intended for grown-ups, though, of course, they can read aloud to their children what is really suited to their own taste, while pretending that they are sacrificing their own interests to those of their young brood. But the real object of the book is to persuade the citizens of America that nothing which is not, at first sight, clear to them is worth the trouble of being learned. This is Mr. Van Loon's final comment on the Reformation: "Protestants and Catholics killed each other for the greater glory of certain theological doctrines, which are as incomprehensible to the present generation as the mysterious inscriptions of the ancient Etruscans." Plain

hundred per cent. Americans know a Christian when they see one, and that is good enough for them. The intellectual strivings of their predecessors can best be dismissed with a sniff. It might be necessary to think for a moment or two before they become intelligible, and thought must at all costs be avoided by the ordinary sensible man, who knows what's what and who has made the world what it is. The ordinary man does not want to read the history of mankind, but at the same time he wants to get an easy reputation for being cultivated, and having a broad view of human affairs, which will keep up his reputation at dinner parties. All such persons will revel in Mr. Van Loon. Out go all the facts, all the long words, all the dates, all the labour of scholars and the strivings of centuries. Instead we get a little chit-chat about the Greek theatre, the Roman provinces, the Papacy, Humanism, and the Revolution. A gentle trickle of easy generalisation flows through the sleepy brain.

An amazing feature of this amazing book is the incredible illustrations that decorate the pages, and are the sort of stuff that is usually scribbled on the blotting-pad by somebody thinking of something else. Those curious in such matters might turn to the two scrawls called "Hannibal crosses the Alps" and "Caesar goes West". They have a certain pathological importance, and reach, it may be safely said, a deeper point of imbecility than has ever yet appeared in any book, or even in any picture. It is perhaps optimistic to hope that this book will not repeat in England its American success. It is impossible to imagine a more ghastly tribute to the intellectual deliquescence of a nation. The publisher, however, is to be congratulated; 492 large pages, enlivened with "over 140 black-and-white illustrations, 9 four-colour pages, numerous animated maps and half-tone pictures, and an Animated Chronology of the History of the World, done by the author", is devilish cheap

at 12s. 6d. And this time perhaps we really have reached rock bottom.

ANONYMOUS, *The New Statesman* (London)

H. BRAINING STUPIDITY

A Short Introduction to the History of Human Stupidity

by WALTER B. PITKIN

If brains had legs, most brains would be all legs, or so Walter Boughton Pitkin, breezy professor in Columbia University's School of Journalism, seems to imply. For its gangling lack of intelligence the Professor takes the world to task. Its follies, like its females, show an infinite variety, but there seem to be only nine major categories of human stupidity. "These intermarry and blend in all sorts of combinations. . . . Some rise to glory, while others are hunted by the police. The history of them all is the history of our race, in the main."

Though abysmal dullness abounds, Author Pitkin finds that lack of integration in people's personalities is what makes their stupidity so genuine. In some ways high-grade morons are cleverer than ordinary men; in some ways near geniuses are more stupid. From the same unbalance suffer individuals, mobs, nations, races. With these as building blocks Author Pitkin gradually erects a Katzenjammer Kastle of the human race. One of its foundation-stones is the Pittsburgh citizen, now dead, who encouraged his smouldering pipe with kerosene; a large block of the Kastle's coping is the English nation, which to the Professor's amazement seems always able to addle through. In a sketch of Henry Ford, Author Pitkin disclaims ambition to write the Ford biography—"the job would be too dull for us." Walt Whitman he calls a caution, but is forced to admit, "Not until introverts no longer read and write shall we be rid of the Steer that lived on Leaves of Grass."

In spite of all, Author Pitkin remains incorrigibly optimistic. With not unheard of scientific naivete he hopes to save mankind by mechanization of many of man's functions. In his age of Super-Sense, "A hay fever sufferer will . . . have a pocket sniffer which will enable him to detect in the summer breeze the presence of one one-trillionth of a grain of timothy, golden rod, or ragweed pollen." On this happy note, with his tongue reaching for his cheek, Professor Pitkin winds up his 540-page introduction with the words: "We are now ready to begin the history of human stupidity." He cannot be said to have left his subject where he found it.

Time, April 4, 1932

EXERCISE 3

Analysis of Review E — *The Good Companions*

1. What words and phrases
 - (a) describe the content and style of the book;
 - (b) present the reviewer's opinions of the content and style;
 - (c) reveal the reviewer's likes and dislikes;
 - (d) reflect the reviewer's literary taste and style?
2. What elements in this review would interest one who had read the book?

EXERCISE 4

Write a 300-word review of the latest book you have read for "supplementary reading".

VII

HOW TO WRITE AN EDITORIAL

THE work of the newspaper reporter is to gather news; the business of the editor is to comment upon it. It is not enough that the editor be well read in all subjects; he must know men and affairs intimately. In some respects he is the conscience of the community; in other respects he is a dictator; at times he may even do a little preaching. He may appear to have his eye fixed only on the horizon, but his finger is always on the pulse of his readers.

Aims of an editor:

To be believed; to give constructive criticism; to make recommendations, to offer remedies; to interpret news; to explain significant events and relate them to life; to influence belief, will and conduct; to encourage his readers to think; to stir his readers to action; to give his readers a larger perspective.

The structure of an editorial:

Sometimes it resembles a long informal essay, but more often it is only two or three paragraphs in length and then it has these characteristics: one point of view; an immediate challenge; obvious meaning; conviction; and human interest.

The nature of an editorial:

It may be serious, satirical, caustic, dramatic, or

humorous, but it must be honest. It should never be prejudiced, ill-tempered or unreasonable, but should always be fair.

The style of an editorial:

To be easily read, it should be written in the language of the people; to convince, it must be clear; its phrases should be terse, pointed and telling; from its brevity it should gather force; it should move swiftly to an unescapable climax.

EXERCISE I

In selecting the following editorials, care has been taken to avoid subjects which are of temporary interest. How many of the characteristics mentioned above are reflected in these editorials?

Pounds of Pumpkin Pie

There seems to be a difference of opinion regarding the quantity of pie a well-nourished pumpkin will produce. *The Stratford Beacon-Herald* gives voice to the daring theory that a 24-pound pumpkin cannot be turned into 24 pounds of pie. The paper even goes so far as to question an assertion to this effect appearing in *The Globe's* South-east Corner, the very keystone in the arch of veracity. The Stratford paper's almost exuberant criticism indicates a recklessness of challenge for which it is difficult to account.

Does the *Beacon-Herald* never eat in a restaurant? Does it not know that this is a synthetic age, in which anything may happen to hitherto-accepted standards of quality? Are there no foundations and other architectural decoration to the pumpkin pies produced about Stratford? Then why the reference to "the cribwork, the joists and the beams" that go to make up this fall and winter delicacy?

If the *Beacon-Herald* will follow this particular kind of pie from its original home, where "the frost is on the pump-

kin and the fodder's in the shock," on through the kitchen, and to the dining-room where it is dismantled, he will realize that, even without the casing and the seeds, the finished product may weigh pound for pound with the raw material—perhaps more. And it should be borne in mind that this was a Western pumpkin, which would have nothing but scorn for the poor pie-producing ability of its kindred in the effete East.

In short, the Stratford paper appears to have overlooked the skill of the modern chef, whose business it is to make a little go a long way. Take the case of a traveller in France just after the war. In a tidy restaurant he ordered rabbit pie. It did not taste quite right, and, when cornered, the waiter admitted that there was a dash of horseflesh in the pasty. "But how much?" persisted the diner. "Oh, about fifty-fifty." "How do you mean fifty-fifty?" "Well," came the reluctant admission, "one horse to one rabbit." So there you are.

✓ *Chess a Boon to Humanity*

In these somewhat disturbed days, when ordinary people are worrying over business conditions, and officials are trying to relieve unemployment, the comforting news arrives that chess players of Toronto and Buffalo have met in combat. Probably because of elections, Imperial Conferences, and other public matters regarded as important, chess of late seems to have been a bit sidetracked.

Chess players, however, are not straining after publicity. Theirs is not a game that attracts the crowd. There is no excitement. Except for the favored few who understand the significance of the moves, there is not a thrill in the keenest contest—nothing to draw from the uninitiated even the faintest applause. Speed is not of the essence of the game, and a player becomes active only after long and serious deliberation. Hockey enthusiasts would see little in

chess; and it is not a pastime for good trenchers who are fearful of being late for dinner.

Then, what is it? One of the greatest mental exercises the world has developed; a pastime for the thinker; a problem for the mathematical mind; the favorite relaxation of trained intellects. Of course, other classes of people play chess, but its truly great exponents are persons of unusual talent. Anyway, Toronto players vanquished the visitors from Buffalo, and it is gratifying to know that the splendid game of chess has in this city devotees who know so well how to play it. While engaged at chess all thought of life's troubles are thrown to the winds; and any game that has this effect on its players is a boon to the race.

A Contribution Which Art Made to Science

At the annual banquet of the Royal Academy of Arts in London the president, Sir William Llewellyn, paid a tribute to the high importance of science to the mental and practical progress of mankind. Lord Rutherford, O.M. in reply regretted that science had contributed little to that form of art which was so finely represented around them. But he proceeded to mention one case where the roles had been reversed and the artist, quite unknowingly, had been able to provide valuable data for science. The clay from which the Greek potter made his beautiful vases more than 2,000 years ago always contained some magnetic oxide of iron. At a certain stage of the cooling after firing, the iron particles were very susceptible to the action of magnetic forces, and orientated themselves like little magnets in the direction of the earth's magnetic field. The direction of that magnetization was fixed permanently when the vase cooled, and since they knew the vase must have always been in a vertical position during firing the scientific man by appropriate methods had been able to find the direction of that magnetization and thus fix the inclination of the earth's field for the time and place of manufacture of the vase. By that

curious observation, they had been able to extend their knowledge of the secular variations in the direction of the earth's field to a remote epoch more than 2,000 years before the importance of such measurements was recognized. From *The Mail and Empire*, Toronto

Larger Feet for Women

Feminists who are so emphatic that in the modern world women must learn, says the *London Times*, to stand on their own feet must be reading with much satisfaction the news that women's feet are, in sober measurable fact, getting steadily larger. The bootsellers, who kneel and know, say that it is so, and that the last five or six years have seen a marked expansion. Women may not take up as much room as they did in the crinoline days, but their effective occupation of the soil is more complete. The thought at once arises whether, if these measurements are correct, firm feet are not really entitled to some of the credit that has been attributed to strong heads. If girls today do not swoon at unexpected and unwelcome news and flop into the nearest arms, it may not be that shock is received with more inward equanimity, but that the stance is firmer because the boots are larger. The tradition, now so firmly and falsely established, that our grandmothers and great-grandmothers were easily overcome is probably due to a somewhat frequent lack of balance in the small shoes which vanity dictated.

It is important, thinks *The Times*, that the large foot shall be acclaimed. If the influence on the old fashion is permitted to make women sensitive, so that a great deal of secret measuring goes on in bath-rooms and foot-reducing is added to the other cares of the day, references to feet will cease to be welcome; and yet the language of admiration is full of such references. The lover at her feet, even the proposal on bended knee, will be something the sensitive female will be resolved to head off, not from any

intention of an ultimate no, but from a morbid sensitiveness about exposing feet the size of rowing boats to any close inspection. The flurried framer of endearing speeches will have to abandon many of the best tropes of the poets and stock passages of the novels, if big feet are covered with ever-lengthening dresses.

But there is fortunately an easy way of making large feet popular. They are a mark of youth, and it is the newcomers into the ranks of young womanhood who have the larger feet, and the tendency, say the bootmakers, is progressive. An inch on the shoe suggests a year off the age. The short girl, the girl with so little neck that she might safely have married Henry VIII himself, can still carry a small foot with pride, since beauty is a matter of proportion; but those who are tall must show large and prominent boots if they want to be thought the very latest models in human-kind. To the Chinese, to whom age is so venerable, this argument would make no appeal; but the Chinese feet take up little room enough, large though China is. In the west, where the value set on youth is a biting commentary on what people make of themselves if given enough time, the late dates of large feet will be almost decisive.

From *The Winnipeg Free Press*

Slackness of Speech

✓ Sir Henry Hadow, the head of Sheffield University, has been lecturing the British Teachers' Conference on slackness of speech, which he describes as a product of sloppiness and inaccuracy of mind. He denounced slovenly pronunciation, and complained that all the vowels were being reduced to the sound which the inexperienced speaker made—"er, er, er." The split infinitive, which was rightly to be regarded as anathema, was publicly defended the other day in a great journal. Sir Henry attacked the use of the word "like" instead of "as," and the ending of sentences with prepositions of one syllable. He complained of the use of

substantives as adjectives, as in such newspaper headlines as "Election Returns" and "Reparation Experts." "Meticulous" is a Latin word, meaning timorous or timid, yet some wrote of "meticulous accuracy," which was meaningless. Sir Henry also lamented the habit of using the most violent words and superlatives, and feared we were in danger of having all the meaning drained out of our picturesque words and phrases.

Some counts in Sir Henry's indictment are true, and some are merely finical or pedantic. The objection to "election returns," for instance, is trivial and unfounded. The use of the substantive in an adjectival sense is a familiar device of great writers, particularly the poets. The headline writer is not the only or the chief offender, if it be an offense. As to the split infinitive, it has the sanction of the masters. They avoid it as a rule, but they do not hesitate to dare the exception when euphony or emphasis requires it. What is the grammatical principle that renders it a crime to end a sentence with a one-syllable preposition, when Shakespeare made glorious poetry by putting it at the end of a clause—"the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to"? Educationists are doing their duty when they combat the sloppiness of speech that is prevalent, but they should beware of preciosity. The English language cannot be put into a strait-jacket.

From *The Globe*, Toronto

Glories of Wind Ships

Landlubbers all about us became seafaring men in spirit this week as they read of the yacht races off New England or heard the radio bulletins from an observation ship on the very course itself. Is it not strange that thousands of people who never saw the ocean, or who would shrink from the tempest-tossed waters no matter how stout the vessel, follow sea life and adventures with great zest? They turn from

daily routine to sea yarns, enjoying the whip of the wind in the shrouds and the toss of the ship in the troubled waters.

The mystery of sea travel never ends. Our imagination stirs with the rise of the masts over the curve of the earth, or the disappearance of a barkentine toward a far land with all its unknown life. Arthur Hugh Clough registered this feeling consummately in *The Joy of the Sea*, with these lines:

Where lies the land to which the ship would go?
Far, far ahead is all the seamen know.
And where the land she travels from? Away,
Far, far behind, is all that they can say.

For many centuries the world's writers have expressed their admiration for the sea. The Psalmist wrote: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters . . . these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

Poets and novelists of Britain have made much of the sea-girt island's glory from its conquests of the waters. Shakespeare, Milton, Campbell, Coleridge, Byron and scores of others have lifted the national spirit by their narratives from the sea. In our own day, W. Clark Russell, Frank T. Bullen, Joseph Conrad, and, in Canada, Frederick William Wallace and Norman Duncan, have given vigor to their stories of stout ships and stout-hearted sailors. Conrad lived the sailor's life, as did Masefield, and from the former we borrow a bit of color:

The strange ship, a darker shape in the night, did not seem to be moving onward but only to grow more distinct right abeam, staring at the *Ferndale* with one green and one red eye which swayed and tossed as if they belonged to the restless head of some invisible monster ambushed in the night among the waves. A moment, like long eternity, elapsed, and, suddenly, the monster which seemed to take to itself the

shape of a mountain shut its green eye without as much as a preparatory wink.

Little wonder that, while youth may follow the yacht races, both young and old gather at night by the open fire and, burying themselves in a sea story, forget the troubles of the day, live in imagination another life and gain freshness for the next struggle.

Exit the Cow

There were startling tidings for that usually imperturbable body of men, the Sanitary Inspectors, when they met a few days since for their Annual Conference and learned that the day is at hand when science will be able to make milk from grass. As for the cow, she is shortly to be squeezed out of the milk business. Men who have often gazed into the large soft eyes of some favorite cow will grasp with difficulty the view that behind that appealing exterior lay a middleman's heart, and that her comfortable bulk has been built up by being thrust between the grass that makes the milk and the human race that needs it. Those who are too kindhearted to think of the cow as a profiteer may use, if they prefer, the language of manufacturing instead of the language of commerce, and regard her as an obsolete process. In the standardization and simplification of manufacture that marks the age, the cow, as a cumbrous and complicated stage in the production of milk, was sure to be improved upon sooner or later. The engines of progress find her in the way, and she is to be eliminated. In whatever language we write it, the fact remains that we are to transfer our custom, and that our milk will in future be obtained wholesale from the grass. It is a dramatic announcement, even though no date is set and the scientific process remains obscure; and it was fortunate that those to whom it was made were, by profession unshrinking facers of reality. The moralists and romancers will be pleased at the corroboration of their

favourite theme that romance is not to be found by looking for it, that the blue bird of happiness is discovered nesting in the dining-room, and the vanishing cow of natural history is revealed not to wandering scholars or vagabond poets, but to Sanitary Inspectors, assembled at Southport. Meanwhile others, who are not moralists, will ask what will happen to the cows, and yet others will wonder how one takes shares in grass before the boom.

For the friend of cows, reflection will afford comfort. Those who have often wondered what the quiet ruminating in the meadows was about, and who have even allowed themselves the suspicion that it was not about very much, have underrated the prudence and forethought of the cow. She has taken care not to keep all her eggs in one basket and has distributed her activities to the point of making sure that should one means of livelihood fail others remain. If she has to take down the proud old trade sign, "Purveyor of Milk to the Human Race", at least she can still style herself proudly "Mother of Bulls", or, less proudly, for a disdainer of manual labour, "Mother of Oxen". At the worst she can make a livelihood as second-class beef. She has other ancillary spheres of humble usefulness, and may be retained in a moderate way of business just to keep the grass up to the mark. Her retirement will be at the worst retirement upon half-pay. There is not really very much danger that our children, while they will obtain cheaper milk, will only know the cow at secondhand, from their general reading, as an extinct moon-jumping monster powerfully affected by music. The recent eager competition to establish in Great Britain and the United States the true site of the school to which Mary took her little lamb is but one sign of the general fear that the old landmarks of our agricultural origins may disappear. The site of that school will be the more eagerly contested if, hearing the news about cows, men suspect that lambs too are but a transient means of obtaining cutlets and wool. In the

meantime we shall do well to note those many differences between kinds of grass that we thought beneath our notice hitherto. The breeding of blades which shall be prize milkers is a study in which there may well be some nice niches, as expert grass tasters, for reliable but superannuated cows.

From *The Times*, London

Without Leaving the Car

There is more good news for the human race, good news from Louisville, Kentucky. Progress is in fine form these days, and a great advance has been made in the business of shopping. One city in the world at least has got rid of the old and tiresome necessity of leaving the motor-car, and finding somewhere to leave it, before shopping joys could begin. The solution was already long overdue, for millions of fresh cars are being bought every year in the United States, and it is only by extreme luck or extreme cunning that the motorist avoids a long walk between his parking place and his real destination, if that destination is a popular centre like a department store. Legs that need to be at their fittest for the long tramps that the shop itself will provide have only too often lost their first freshness between the car and the shop. This is bad for business, and has already lasted too long. Now comes the solution, and it is beautiful in its simplicity. The motor-car is to go into the shop. The shopping is done by driving slowly along grooved slots, stretching out a hand to either side, piling the chosen goods in the car, and driving out past the cashier's desk. It saves much else besides the legs, for the business of wrapping and sending home goods need be no more. Undoubtedly life will be more strenuous for shop-walkers; and there are other complications. The shoplifter will find a closed car more useful than a cloak. The shopper who stays undecided at the counter pondering and weighing her choices, and letting time decide, will not only make a bigger

block in the traffic, but, with the best will in the world, will only too often fail to start a stone-cold engine. Unless the human heart changes, the shopper of clear-cut decisions will find his intended exit painfully slow. He will find himself deliberately held up while the salesman's litany of possible wants is chanted at him. But the real greatness of the new development will be seen, not among the stately counters of dignified merchandise, but in the bargain basement.

We are in fact on the verge of a development comparable to the growth of chivalry, and the tournament is coming back, in a commercial setting to suit a commercial age, in the form of the sales, announced through the land by heralds, when all who will may enter the fray and stake their lives for the fair guerdons. The race to the remnant counter, the fierce charge and counter-charge, the explosions and the bursting into flames will mark the grandeur of these mounted sales and will be worthy of an epic. The old primitive era when the elbow, the umbrella, the basket, and the scarf were the principal weapons of offence and defence will soon have a picturesqueness of its own as the first rude dawn of Bargain Sale history, before the armoured car had come. It may be assumed, on the analogy of previous human efforts that skill in the handling of cars is still in its infancy. What Tartars learnt to do on horseback, what Australian natives learnt to do with the boomerang, they learnt by inseparable companionship. Shopping was the most formidable obstacle in the way of that inseparable companionship between cars and their drivers. All the other offices of life can be performed justly, magnanimously, and skillfully without leaving a car. To sleep, to eat, to do gymnastic exercises, have long been simplicity itself. Shopping was the trouble, but now that whatever is wanted can be fetched over the side and whatever is finished with can be dropped overboard, there is no reason whatever for all this getting out of cars which reveals the restlessness of the

age. There is little doubt that a type is now growing up which is happiest in a car. The sense of power is comforting and not otherwise obtainable. The quest of mileage gives life an object it otherwise lacks. The speed and ease give a sense of extreme fitness without the pains of physical exertion. The wandering knight-errantry, the looking for something to kill, the challenging, the full tilt, and all the glamour that makes men love the horns of chauffeury as once they loved the horns of chivalry, all make the road the true home of the bold. Humanity has struck its tents and filled its tanks, and can learn without concern that bombs from the air will destroy its brick dwellings, for it does not really need them any more.

From *The Times*, London

The Beauty of "Perhaps"

Lord Morley said in his old age that "Perhaps" was a great word, and that we are reading Montaigne still because of his liking for such words of caution as "Perhaps," and "Probably," and "It may be." Yet too many of them irritate us in a writer or a speaker; they may be a bad habit born of the timidity that comes of ignorance, like the use of the word "somewhat" by those who are afraid to say anything decisive. To fall back on these qualifications because you fear that some one will prove you wrong if you say the thing outright is mere hedging, a trick of hesitation that injures style without improving thought.

But we may be sure that Lord Morley did not mean to praise this kind of "perhaps," and did not find it in Montaigne. There is a "Perhaps" that comes not of vagueness, but of the desire for greater precision, as there is a scepticism that comes not of unfaith, but of faith. There are those to whom every subject, and indeed the whole universe, is so empty of content that they come easily to conclusions about it all; and there are those to whom it is all so rich that every general statement seems to them

dangerously inadequate, or at best only useful for practical purposes. It was the "Perhaps" of these that Lord Morley admired, and, as a practical statesman, he must have admired it in action as well as in thought. The men who do most harm in the world, who most frustrate and discourage the highest hopes of mankind, are the Robespierres, whose narrow certainty reduces the greatest ideas to an absurdity, who will not revise an opinion lest their minds should fall back into chaos, and who care more for their own consistency than for the lives of men. To them the loftiness of their motives is enough; they never consider results; they never suspect that they may have unconscious motives much less lofty than those of which they are conscious.

But the profoundest philosophy, the best theology even, comes from those who do not cry "What is truth?" like jesting Pilate, from a disbelief in its very existence, but who distrust their own power of grasping it all because of its beauty and richness. They are like the greatest artists, whose subtlety comes of the fact that they know they can draw only a tenth of what is there. The thrill of life is in the passionate humility of their choice; and so it is with thought also. The most "God intoxicated" men are the least satisfied with theological formulas, and would write "Perhaps" all down the Athanasian Creed. It is not God they doubt, but the human tendency to simplify reality out of the greatest things for purposes of thought. Yet in their "Perhaps" there is no despair; they see the value of all thought, of all conviction, so long as the thinker does not believe that his thought is a complete equivalent to the reality or that his conviction is free from the imperfections of his own nature. For the more we learn about the human mind the more we become aware that all ideas are perverted by its peculiarities; and the thinker must constantly allow for this perversion in himself, must whisper to himself "Perhaps" when he is most pleased with the neatness of a

formula. Reality, he must be sure, is better than any version of it, and he must be thankful that any truth of his is not the whole truth.

From *The Times*, London

EXERCISE 2

On one of the following topics write an editorial for the readers of your school magazine:

Uniform dress for high school girls; Slang; Why study science?; Classroom manners; Silence in the Library; Adventures in Sarcasm; Under the microscope; Wanted—more school spirit; Hobbies; Politeness on the Campus; Hoodlums in the Gallery; The tyranny of Noise; Why go in for Dramatics?; An alternative for Examinations; The misuse of holidays; High School memories; Home-Mechanics for girls; Every pupil should know how to swim; Sportsmanship; The Abuse of Books.

VIII

PROSE STYLE

Whenever I read a book or passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some perspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. . . . That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write; whether I have profited or not, that is the way. R. L. STEVENSON

ENGLISH prose style may be roughly divided into two classes, the grand style and the colloquial style. As you study the following models, try to discover to which style each belongs.

A. JOHN LYLY (1553—1606)

(Stylish prose, sound structure but 'modish expression; artificial and over-refined; abundant epigrams, antitheses, similes, metaphors, alliteration; a mincing gait and a pretty use of words.)

I have loved you long, and now at the length I must leave you, whose hard heart I will not impute to discourtesy, but destiny; it contenteth me that I died in faith, though I could not live in favour, neither was I ever more desirous to begin my love, than I am now to end my life. Things which cannot be altered, are to be borne, not blamed: follies past are sooner remembered than redressed, and time lost may well be repented but never recalled. I will not recount the passions I have suffered, I think the effects show them, and now it is more behoveful for me to fall to

praying for a new life, than to remember the old: yet this I add (which though it merit no mercy to save, it deserveth thanks of a friend) that only I loved thee, and lived for thee, and now die for thee.

From *Euphues and his England*

B. FRANCIS BACON (1561—1626)

(A clean, precise, compact and pithy style; musical and imaginative; sometimes difficult but never obscure; direct and vigorous.)

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business: for expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies, is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humour of a scholar; they perfect nature, and are perfected by experience—for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation.

C. THOMAS BROWNE (1605—1682)

(A full, glowing, dignified and magnificent style; a sumptuous manner and a stately rhythm; scholarly, but long winded.)

Oblivion is not to be hired: the greater part must be content as though they had not been, to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century. The number of the

dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the Aequinox? Every houre addes unto that current Arithmetique, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina of life, and even Pagans could doubt whether thus to live, were to dye; since our longest sunne sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches, and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darknesse, and have our light in ashes; since the brother of death haunts us with dying memento's, and time that grows old it self, bids us hope no long duration: diurnity is a dream and folly of expectation.

From *Christian Morals*

D. THE BIBLE

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoyce and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoyce even with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart: Be strong, fear not. Behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitations of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

From *Isaiah, XXXV*.

E. JOHN MILTON (1608—1674)

(Noble, sonorous and majestic prose.)

Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book. Who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life.

F. JOHN BUNYAN (1628—1688)

(A homely, unadorned style; rapid, graphic and vigorous, but sometimes cumbersome and often lacking in rhythm; rustic prose.)

But we will come again to this Valley of *Humiliation*. It is the best, and most fruitful piece of Ground in all those parts. It is fat Ground, and as you see consisteth much in Meadows; and if a Man was to come here in the Summer-time as we do now, if he knew not anything before thereof, and if he also delighted himself in the sight of his Eyes, he might see that that would be delightful to him. Behold,

how green this Valley is, also how beautified with *Lilies*. I have also known many labouring men that have got good Estates in this Valley of *Humiliation*. (For God resisteth the Proud; but gives *more, more* Grace to the Humble) for indeed it is a very fruitful Soil, and doth bring forth by handfuls. Some also have wished that the next way to their Father's House were here, that they might be troubled no more with either Hills or Mountains to go over; but the way is the way, and there's an end.

G. JOHN DRYDEN (1631—1700)

(A plain, lucid and quick-manœuvring style; a combination of the styles of Bunyan and Browne; practical and intelligible; easy, yet austere; simple, yet classic; straightforward, graceful, and dignified.)

He (Chaucer) must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive Nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales* the various Manners and Humours (as we now call them) of the whole *English* Nation, in his Age. Not a single Character has escaped him. All his Pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations, but in their very physiognomies and persons. *Baptista Porta* could not have described their natures better than by the marks which the Poet gives them. The Matter and Manner of their Tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different Educations, Humours, and Callings, that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious Characters are distinguished by their several sorts of Gravity: their Discourses are such as belong to their Age, their Calling and their Breeding; such as are becoming of them and of them only. Some of his Persons are Vicious, and some Vertuous; some are unlearned, or (as *Chaucer* calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the Low

Characters is different: the *Reeve*, the *Miller*, and the *Cook*, are several men, and distinguished from each other as much as the mincing *Lady-Prioress* and the broad-speaking, gap-toothed Wife of *Bath*. But enough of this; there is such a variety of Game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my Choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the Proverb, that *here is God's plenty*.

H. JONATHAN SWIFT (1667—1745)

(A lively, flexible style; vigorous and nervous; simple, idiomatic diction; manageable sentences; emphatic arrangement; a natural and unaffected manner; devoid of apparent literary devices; a high standard of serviceable prose.)

This single stick, which you now behold ingloriously lying in that neglected corner, I once knew in a flourishing state in a forest. It was full of sap, full of leaves, and full of boughs; but now in vain does the busy art of man pretend to vie with nature, by tying that withered bundle of twigs to its sapless trunk; it is now at best but the reverse of what it was, a tree turned upside-down, the branches on the earth, and the root in the air; it is now handled by every dirty wench, condemned to do her drudgery, and, by a capricious kind of fate, destined to make other things clean, and be nasty itself; at length, worn to the stumps in the service of the maids, it is either thrown out of doors or condemned to the last use—of kindling a fire. When I beheld this I sighed, and said within myself, "Surely man is a broomstick!" Nature sent him into the world strong and lusty, in a thriving condition, wearing his own hair on his head, the proper branches of this reasoning vegetable, till the axe of intemperance has lopped off his green boughs, and left him a withered trunk; he then flies to art, and puts on a periwig, valuing himself upon an unnatural bundle of hairs, all covered with powder, that never grew on his

head; but now should this our broomstick pretend to enter the scene, proud of those birchen spoils it never bore, and all covered with dust, through the sweepings of the finest lady's chamber, we should be apt to ridicule and despise its vanity. Partial judges that we are of our own excellencies, and other men's defaults!

From *A Meditation upon a Broomstick*

I. JOSEPH ADDISON (1672—1719)

(A natural, familiar and graceful style; it resembles speech at its best—the conversation of gentle, witty, cultured people; a practical style that has little time for frills or artifice; appropriate words; perfect rhythm; urban prose.)

As I was surveying the moon walking in her brightness, and taking her progress among the constellations, a thought rose in me which I believe very often perplexes and disturbs men of serious and contemplative natures. David himself fell into it in that reflection: "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou regardest him?" In the same manner, when I considered that infinite host of stars, or, to speak more philosophically, of suns, which were then shining upon me, with those innumerable sets of planets or worlds which were moving round their respective suns—when I still enlarged the idea, and supposed another heaven of suns and worlds rising still above this which we discovered, and these still enlightened by a superior firmament of luminaries, which are planted at so great a distance, that they may appear to the inhabitants of the former as the stars do to us—in short, while I pursued this thought, I could not but reflect on that little insignificant figure which I myself bore amidst the immensity of God's works.

J. SAMUEL JOHNSON (1709—1784)

(A formal, correct, pompous and ponderous style; specialized vocabulary; studied grace; laboured harmony; controlled strength; by turns severe, dull, dictatorial, stodgy, inflated, magniloquent, pedantic, or stilted.)

The utmost excellence at which humanity can arrive is a constant and determinate pursuit of virtue without regard to present dangers or advantage, a continual reference of every action to the divine will, an habitual appeal to everlasting justice, and an unvaried elevation of the intellectual eye to the reward which perseverance alone can obtain. But that pride which many, who presume to boast of generous sentiments, allow to regulate their measures has nothing nobler in view than the approbation of men; of beings whose superiority we are under no obligation to acknowledge, and who, when we have courted them with the utmost assiduity, can confer no valuable or permanent reward; of beings who ignorantly judge of what they do not understand, or partially determine what they never have examined; and whose sentence is therefore of no weight till it has received the ratification of our own conscience.

K. OLIVER GOLDSMITH (1728—1774)

(A strongly personal style; simple, natural, familiar, and dignified; intimate in mood, graceful in rhythm; conversational and elegant in manner.)

The expected time for the play to begin at last arrived; the curtain was drawn, and the actors came on. A woman, who personated a queen, came in curtseying to the audience, who clapped their hands upon her appearance. Clapping of hands is, it seems, the manner of applauding in England; the manner is absurd, but every country, you know, has its peculiar absurdities. I was equally surprised, however, at the submission of the actress, who should have considered herself as a queen, as at the little discernment of the audience

who gave her such marks of applause before she attempted to deserve them. Preliminaries between her and the audience being thus adjusted, the dialogue was supported between her and a most hopeful youth, who acted the part of her confidant. They both appeared in extreme distress, for it seems the queen had lost a child some fifteen years before, and still kept its dear resemblance next her heart, while her kind companion bore a part of her sorrows.

Her lamentations grew loud; comfort is offered, but she detests the very sound: she bids them preach comfort to the winds. Upon this her husband comes in, who, seeing the queen so much afflicted, can himself hardly refrain from tears, or avoid partaking in the soft distress. After thus grieving through three scenes, the curtain dropped for the first act.

L. EDMUND BURKE (1729—1797)

(A brilliant style modelled on Dryden's; logical, and virile; eloquent, yet restrained; full, rounded, carefully poised sentences; well constructed paragraphs; deep thought, strong feeling, rich vocabulary, and a flowing rhythm; passionate and magnificent prose.)

All government, indeed every human benefit and enjoyment, every virtue and every prudent act, is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences; we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and we choose rather to be happy citizens, than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty, to enjoy civil advantages; so we must sacrifice civil liberties, for the advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire. But, in all fair dealings, the thing bought must bear some proportion to the purchase paid. None will barter away the immediate jewel of his soul.

EXERCISE 1

1. In which paragraph given above is the style and expression particularly well suited to the thought? Give examples of felicity of diction and phrasing.

2. In each of any three paragraphs, find the sentence which contains the central thought, and show how the other sentences in the paragraph are related to it in thought and form.

3. Select the paragraphs that reflect in their style the personality of the writer.

EXERCISE 2

1. The essay which follows won a prize for being the best imitation of one of the styles given above. In which style is it written? What characteristics of that style does it exemplify?

Of the Talkies

As Ragtime is the cacophonous Childe of Musicke, so be the Talkies the clamorous Childe of Films; And as the Blare of Jazz swelleth the Heartes of some, while to others it is as a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense, so some Delight in the Talkies, while others Abominate their Noise.

There be two degrees of Talkies, whereby Mens Voices be heard: And the First of these is the Talkie that holds to the Stage, for in it Men speak their Words as in a Play House; and many praise this Form of Talkie, for the cost of this Mummery is smalle, while that of the Acting is greate: Also there is no neede of Sundry Sub Titles; but the Banishment of these Sub Titles is a sore Affliction to the Deafe for *Surdus magnam Vocem audire non potest*; while it profiteth not the Blinde, for the Words of the Talkie cannot be Divided from the Action: Moreover the Extreme Harshness of the Tones of these Talkies offendeth the Ear of the sensitive Man; for the Language of the Talkies is not the Tongue of England, but of Plantations across the Ocean; to the Rasping of which is added the metallic Sounde of the Talkie Machine.

The Second degree of the Talkies is that to which is ioyned Song and Musicke, and truly this is a Thing of Eville: For Maro, I am sure, saith *Rauco strepuerant Cantu*, and it is not fitting that Musicke become as the Cries of Wilde Beastes: Since each Lande has her own Musicke, it is righte that each should fashion her aires to sute the Peculiar Qualities of that Nation: While the Quires that do sing the Songs of the Talkies do sing in a Syncopated Melodie which is common to all Peoples: This is not Goode, for the Musicke is a Savage Musicke which proceedeth from Wilde Men and doth appeal to the Passions in Mens Heartes: And so while the First Variety may worke no Eville (though it doth not tende to Wisedome) the Second Variety is to be Shunned.

Nevertheless alle these Things are but Toyes, and may not fitly be placed amongst Serious Observations.

CICELY FRASER, *The Bookman*

EXERCISE 3

1. In the style of Johnson, write a paragraph on one of the following:

honesty, sincerity, patience, athletics, medicine, gardening.

2. In the style of Lyly, write a paragraph one one of the following:

my dog, a rainbow, a dollar bill, a bluebird, the moon.

3. In the style of Bacon, write a paragraph on one of the following:

reading, tennis, swimming, walking, farming.

4. In the style of Bunyan, write a paragraph on one of the following:

pride, happiness, sorrow, music.

5. In the style of Goldsmith, write a paragraph on one of the following:

a moving picture, a circus, the local fair or exhibition, a class room, a ball game.

6. In the style of Addison, write a paragraph on one of the following:

the flight of a bird, the reaping of grain, a thunder storm, a bonfire.

7. What special features of English prose style have appealed to you so far in this study? Write a short article on this subject.

EXERCISE ON PRONUNCIATION

How many of the following words can you pronounce correctly?

apricot, adult, address, apparatus, April, arctic, aviator, amateur, attorney, automobile, axe, acts, alien, accurate, abdomen, absolute, bouquet, burlesque, bequeath, cruel, comparable, comely, conduit, chasm, column, clique, covetous, chassis, culinary, carillon, casement, convenient, data, dishevel, detour, defects, dais, duty, duke, economics, envelope, err, error, extraordinary, exquisite, elm, exigency, enthusiasm, engine, finance, futile, fragile, forehead, film, genuine, gesture, gist, gross, grievous, gratis, garrulous, grimace, gunwale, handkerchiefs, heroine, humour, hotel, heinous, Italian, interesting, irreparable, iodine, inquiry, impious, indictment, inexplicable, just, juvenile, kiln, library, leisure, literature, municipal, mists, mischievous, nephew, naive, nonchalant, oppressed, opportunity, oaths, privacy, patriot, premier, pathos, portentous, primarily, positively, poem, peculiar, probe, quinine, quay, querulous, quandary, quarrel, ration, recess, romance, research, route, ruin, rhythm, really, respite, superfluous, supple, squalor, squirrel, succumb, stupid, spiritual, soften, status, suit, tryst, tortoise, Tuesday, the, tune, vagaries, valiant, violent, Wednesday, whistle, were, whine, wont, yesterday, yeast, youths.

IX

PROSE STYLE (*Continued*)

TO write well, one must be honest with himself. Two persons may hold the same opinions, but they do not express them in the same way. Their personal attitudes toward their subject mould their styles. Their styles reflect their individualities. Ben Jonson said, "No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech." The same is true of each period in the development of English prose style. The models you have read reflect not only the characteristics of the writers, but the manners, thoughts and inclinations prevalent in the respective centuries in which they were written. In the following excerpts from Nineteenth Century prose, the spirit of the age is translated in different ways. Try to discover in each the personality of the writer as you read. (See Exercise 1, which follows model "S", page 116.)

M. WILLIAM HAZLITT (1778—1830)

The proper force of words lies not in the words themselves, but in their application. A word may be a fine-sounding word, of an unusual length, and very imposing from its learning and novelty, and yet in the connection in which it is introduced may be quite pointless and irrelevant. It is not pomp or pretension, but the adaptation of the expression to the idea, that clenches a writer's meaning:—as it is not the size or glossiness of the materials, but their

being fitted each to its place, that gives strength to the arch; or as the pegs and nails are as necessary to the support of the building as the largest timbers, and more so than the more showy, unsubstantial ornaments. I hate anything that occupies more space than it is worth. I hate to see a load of band-boxes go along the street, and I hate to see a parcel of big words without anything in them. A person who does not deliberately dispose of all his thoughts alike in cumbrous draperies and flimsy disguises may strike out twenty varieties of familiar everyday language, each coming nearer to the feeling he wants to convey, and at last not hit upon that particular and only one which may be said to be identical with the exact impression in his mind. This would seem to show that Mr. Corbett is hardly right in saying that the first word that occurs is always the best. It may be a very good one; and yet a better may present itself on reflection or from time to time. It should be suggested naturally, however, and spontaneously, from a fresh and lively conception of the subject. We seldom succeed by trying at improvement, or by merely substituting one word for another that we are not satisfied with, as we cannot recollect the name of a place or person by merely plaguing ourselves about it. We wander farther from the point by persisting in a wrong scent; but it starts up accidentally in the memory when we least expect it, by touching some link in the chain of previous association.

N. CHARLES LAMB (1775—1834)

I was pointing out to my cousin last evening, over our Hyson (which we are old fashioned enough to drink unmixed still of an afternoon) some of these *speciosa miracula* upon a set of extraordinary old blue china (a recent purchase) which we were now for the first time using; and could not help remarking, how favourable circumstances had been to us of late years, that we could afford to please the eye sometimes with trifles of this sort—

when a passing sentiment seemed to over-shade the brows of my companion. I am quick at detecting these summer clouds in Bridget.

"I wish the good old times would come again," she said, "when we were not quite so rich. I do not mean, that I want to be poor; but there was a middle state;"—so she was pleased to ramble on,—“in which I am sure we were a great deal happier. A purchase is but a purchase, now that you have money enough and to spare. Formerly it used to be a triumph. When we coveted a cheap luxury (and O! how much ado I had to get you to consent in those times!) we were used to have a debate two or three days before, and to weigh the *for* and *against*, and think what we might spare it out of, and what saving we could hit upon, that should be an equivalent. A thing was worth buying then, when we felt the money that we paid for it.”

O. THOMAS DE QUINCEY (1786—1859)

If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, a daughter, or sister in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle is that in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully, in the desertion and silence of the streets, and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man—if all at once he should hear the deathlike stillness broken up by the sounds of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly

resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible by reaction.

P. THOMAS MACAULAY (1800—1859)

Of all people, children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by Hamlet or Lear as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-Hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet in spite of her knowledge, she believes; she weeps, she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds. In a rude state of society men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is, therefore, in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses and even of good ones—but little poetry. Men will judge and compare, but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets and comment on them, and to a certain extent enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief.

✓ Q. THOMAS CARLYLE (1795—1881)

Two men I honour, and no third. First the toilworn Craftsman that with earth-made implement laboriously conquers the earth, and makes her man's.

Venerable to me is the hard hand; crooked, coarse; wherein notwithstanding lies a cunning virtue indefeasibly royal, as of the sceptre of this planet. Venerable too is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, besoiled, with its rude

intelligence; for it is the face of a man living manlike. Oh, but the more venerable for thy rudeness, and even because we must pity as well as love thee! Hardly-entreated brother! For us was thy back so bent, for us were thy straight limbs and fingers so deformed; thou wert our conscript, on whom the lot fell, and fighting our battles wert so marred. For in thee too lay a god-created form, but it was not to be unfolded; encrusted must it stand with the thick adhesions and defacements of labour; and thy body, like thy soul, was not to know freedom. Yet toil on, toil on; thou art in thy duty, be out of it who may: thou toilest for the altogether indispensable, for daily bread.

A second man I honour, and still more highly: him who is seen toiling for the spiritually indispensable; not daily bread, but the bread of life. Is not he too in his duty; endeavouring towards inward harmony; revealing this, by act or by word, through all his outward endeavours, be they high or low? Highest of all, when his outward and his inward endeavour are one: when we can name him artist; not earthly craftsman only, but inspired thinker, who with heaven-made implement conquers heaven for us! If the poor and humble toil that we have food, must not the high and glorious toil for him in return, that he have light, have guidance, freedom, immortality? These two, in all their degrees, I honour; all else is chaff and dust, which let the wind blow whither it listeth.

R. JAMES FROUDE (1818—1894)

And now it (the mediaeval age) is all gone—like an unsubstantial pageant faded; and between us and the old English there lies a gulf of mystery which the prose of the historian will never adequately bridge. They cannot come to us, and our imagination can but feebly penetrate to them. Only among the aisles of the cathedrals, only as we gaze upon their silent figures sleeping in their tombs, some faint conceptions float before us of what these men were when

they were alive; and perhaps in the sound of church bells, that peculiar creation of mediaeval age, which falls upon the ear like the echo of a vanished world.

S. JOHN RUSKIN (1819—1900)

The soldier's trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain. This, without well knowing its own meaning, the world honours it for. A bravo's trade is slaying; but the world has never respected bravos more than merchants; the reason it honours the soldier is, because he holds his life at the service of the State. Reckless he may be—fond of pleasure, or of adventure. All kinds of bye-motives and mean impulses may have determined the choice of his profession and may affect (to all appearance exclusively) his daily conduct in it; but our estimate of him is based on this ultimate fact—of which we are well assured—that put him in a fortress breach, with all the pleasures of the world behind him, and only death and his duty in front of him, he will keep his face to the front; and he knows that his choice may be put to him at any moment—and has beforehand taken his part—virtually takes such part continually—does, in reality, die daily.

EXERCISE I

1. Find adjectives to describe the style of each of the passages given above. The following words may be suggestive:

grandiose, artificial, exquisite, whimsical, familiar, condensed, concise, terse, curt, laconic, verbose, prolix, practical, graceful, personal, ornate, poetic, fluent, intimate, aggressive, exuberant, rich, flexible, monotonous, volcanic, earnest, informal, sublime, dignified.

2. Select the passage you like best and give reasons for your preference.

3. Choose a style suitable for each of the following subjects and write a paragraph upon it, using one of the paragraphs given above as a model:

catching a street car; rock gardens; fashions in dress; a barber; a ploughman; chopping wood; an automobile accident; a skyscraper; winter moonlight; solitude; sacrifice; books.

Criticize the style of the following paragraphs of contemporary prose: (See exercise on page 120.)

A.

When, two days previously, the news of the approaching end had been made public, astonished grief had swept over the country. It appeared as if some monstrous reversal of the course of nature was about to take place. The vast majority of her subjects had never known a time when Queen Victoria had not been reigning over them. She had become an indissoluble part of their whole scheme of things, and that they were about to lose her appeared a scarcely possible thought. She herself, as she lay blind and silent, seemed to those who watched her to be divested of all thinking—to have glided already, unawares, into oblivion. Yet, perhaps, in the secret chambers of consciousness, she had her thoughts, too. Perhaps her fading mind called up once more the shadows of the past to float before it, and retraced, for the last time, the vanished visions of that long history—passing back and back, through the cloud of years to older and ever older memories. . . .

From *Queen Victoria*

LYTTON STRACHEY

(By permission of the publishers,

Chatto & Windus, and Harcourt, Brace and Company.)

B.

He is about to be struck down. A dark hand, gloved at first in folly, now intervenes. Exit Czar. Deliver him and all he loved to wounds and death. Belittle his efforts, asperse his conduct, insult his memory; but pause then to tell us who else was found capable. Who or what could guide the Russian State? Men gifted and daring; men ambitious and fierce; spirits audacious and commanding—

of these there was no lack. But none could answer the few plain questions on which the life and fame of Russia turned. With victory in her grasp she fell upon the earth, devoured alive, like Herod of old by worms. But not in vain her valiant deeds. The giant mortally stricken had just time, with dying strength, to pass the torch eastward across the ocean to a new Titan long sunk in doubt who now arose and began ponderously to arm. The Russian Empire fell on March 16; on April 6 the United States entered the war.

RT. HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL

From *The World Crisis*, 1916—1918

(By permission of the author and
Thornton Butterworth Limited.)

C.

✓ If it had not been for these things, I might have lived out my life, talking at street corners to scorning men. I might have die, unmarked, unknown, a failure. Now we are not a failure. This is our career and our triumph. Never in our full life can we hope to do such work for tolerance, for joostice, for man's onderstanding, as now we do by an accident. Our words,—our lives—our pains—nothing! The taking of our lives—lives of a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler—all! That last moment belong to us—that agony is our triumph.

VANZETTI

To JUDGE THAYER, who sentenced him

D.

The grainy sand had gone from under his feet. His boots trod again a damp crackling mast, razorshells, squeaking pebbles, that on the unnumbered pebbles beats, wood sieved by the shipworm, lost Armada. Unwholesome sandflats waited to suck his treading soles, breathing upward sewage breath. He coasted them, walking warily. A porterbottle stood up, stogged to its waist, in the cakey sand and dough. A sentinel: isle of dreadful thirst. Broken

hoops on the shore: at the land a maze of dark cunning nets: further away chalk-scrawled backdoors and on the higher beach a drying-line with two crucified shirts.

Selected

E.

The innumerable wrinkles, which creased her weather-beaten countenance into a horror that never failed to startle sensitive eyes, were miraculously softened, and the bitter lines around her grim mouth had relaxed in a fatuous smile exhibiting two rows of perfect teeth that had gleamed with such refulgence for many years in Dr. Samuel Robbins' office a few blocks away on a roseate plush pad while her few wiry grey hairs had been transformed into a most amazing coiffure.

Student's Theme

F.

Backwards and forwards flew the shuttle, weaving catastrophe, and at every passage of it the web of war grew on the clashing loom. Early in August the shirt of fire in which Europe was to burn for four years, was ready for the wearing, and the old order of secure prosperity of which I have been speaking, smouldered into ash, and England will know it no more.

From *As We Were*

E. F. BENSON

(By permission of Longmans, Green & Company.)

G.

Soon, "in goodly time," he was taken from Whitehall. He was buried at Windsor, though not as he had planned. His council named a Protector, not as he had decided. The French took back Boulogne, not as he had treated. Out of the wreck of all his marriages, the female child, Elizabeth, at whose birth he winced, whom he despised and rejected, took the scepter he meant for war-lords and raised it to heights of which the poets sing. The Cromwell whom he

X c.

beheaded would have a descendant. In 101 years, on this site of Whitehall, almost on the anniversary of his own death, Oliver Cromwell would behead the King of England. Strong passions breed strong passions.

From *Henry VIII*

FRANCIS HACKETT

(By permission of Jonathan Cape Limited, Toronto.)

EXERCISE

1. What is the central thought or purpose behind each paragraph quoted above? How far has the writer succeeded in fixing the attention of the reader on this image?
2. Which paragraph expresses the strongest emotion? Which contains the clearest images? Which has the most appealing rhythm? Which contains the greatest number of vague, hackneyed or abstract expressions? Which has the least unity of impression?
3. Which paragraph contains the most violent images or figures of speech? Which the greatest number of rhetorical imperatives?
4. How many different literary devices are employed in these paragraphs?
5. Which paragraphs are faulty in word order or sentence structure?
6. Which passages are in style the most dramatic, most pathetic, most fantastic, most exaggerated, most imaginative, or most natural?
7. In which paragraphs is the style best suited to the thought?
8. Which of the following terms best describes the style of each of the passages given above? (Swift, graphic, picturesque, easy, flowing, abrupt, epigrammatic, intense, transparent, involved, polished, tame, wordy, flat, confused, eccentric, brilliant, expedient, impressionistic, emotional.)
9. Which style possesses most individuality? Which would you recognize again?
10. Which paragraph is in style the best and which the worst?

The models of prose style presented in the remainder of this book, have been chosen from the works of contemporary or at least modern writers. Consequently, you will have abundant opportunities of studying modern prose. To prepare further for this study, examine the following passages. From them select phrases which you consider original and effective, and ideas which are particularly relevant to our study.

A.

A book no longer purls along like a brook in the meadow: it carries you along with the speed of an express train, it is naked as the steel frame of a skyscraper; it strikes you with the impact of a dum-dum bullet. At any moment one is likely to be ground to a pulp beneath the onrushing pages of a modern novelist, or K.O.'d as a Hemingway counters with a right to the jaw.

Why are writers to-day abandoning the comfortable classic sentence, the majestic pseudo-Biblical phraseology and monkeying around with strange patterns of words?

A writer's style is his attempt to bring himself, his subject and the reader into sympathy, and never before have reader and writer faced each other in a day when life moved so jerkily, forces clashed so sharply, as now. Speeches delivered in London are heard in the living rooms of Spokane; photographs talk, aeroplanes broadcast cigarette ads; traffic lights wink on and off; the motorist presses his right foot a little nearer the floor and travels 65 miles an hour over the countryside. To establish a sympathy between himself and the reader, both of them darting here and there in the midst of all this, the writer's style must be in some sense a distillation of the life to-day, as applied to his subject. If his subject not be a contemporary one, then his style may be tempered by the flavor of the time about which

he writes; if the subject be of to-day—Times Square, stock tickers, pent-house apartments—then the sky is, quite justly, the limit. It is the realization of this which is making both reader and writer more and more interested in experiments in style.

From *Outlaw Years*

ROBERT M. COATES

(By permission of The Macaulay Company.)

The Art of Writing

Every week at least a thousand contributions—articles, letters and poems—pass through these editorial offices. Recently, owing to our Short Story Competition, the number was increased and a new note was imported into these literary excursions. This has prompted us to set forth for our readers a few general considerations on the subject of writing for the Press.

We have already expressed our surprise (in the review which prefaced the winning story) that those who desire to write for the public do not pay more attention to the details of what is a very subtle art: we pointed out then that the great writers of both past and present revise and recast their manuscripts time and again, and hinted that what was lacking in the essays submitted was critical ability rather than inventive power or literary facility. The reason for this is simple: the average reader is hurried. His attention must be arrested. He must be told clearly what he is going to read about and, if possible, the conclusions you expect him to draw. If you are not prepared to do this in submitting articles to editors as an unknown contributor, and rely alone on the importance of your subject, you will rarely see yourself in print.

In short stories the beginning may be different from that necessary for articles on serious subjects. In fiction you should adumbrate your setting and characterize the actors at once, but you should keep the reader guessing what is

going to happen: it is, of course, a matter of infinite subtlety. Good writing induces expectancy: that is the reason why adjectives and phrases which are worn by over-use are hated by every good editor. A couple of *clichés* will spoil an otherwise competent article. But beyond this, there is something more mysterious. The stuff of life must be in your prose, a kind of literary ether permeating it and giving it cohesion. This binding quality, this invisible catalyst, is some indefinable quality which works its magic between writer and reader in ways unknown. Unless you know exactly what you want to say and feel strongly and simply and clearly about it, your sentences will not hold together: they will be dead things: your article will be a skeleton. You must inform your words with life from your own source of Life. Style, in short, is the character of the writer. A truism, perhaps, but one which beginners should remember. Know your own capacities, then, and write of what you know and on subjects on which you feel strongly. And do not write at all (unless you have long experience of the craft) at times when you are feeling ill or worried. A sluggish habit of body ruins writing as much as sluggish emotions.

Having dealt with the introductory paragraph, and with that one virtue of language without which all else is dead, we come to certain tricks of the trade which anybody may acquire. It would seem unnecessary to point out that type-script must be definitely black and properly spaced, and the pages must be fastened together so that they may be turned over easily, yet such details are continually neglected. Then there are punctuation, *clichés*, sing-song rhythms, and lack of objectivity. Anyone can learn to put in commas, anyone can avoid "such is not the case" or "the vast majority of people" when he means "this is not so" or "the majority," and phrases which need a rest, such as "England's green and pleasant land." As to rhythm, if the article be read aloud, anyone with an average ear can detect unpleasing

cadences. Send nothing to the Press until you have read it aloud to some victim.

As regards objectivity, many articles might be written on the value of a direct approach in journalism. The reader must be amused or interested by the human appeal of names and facts and concrete instances, which he can apply to his own experience. Abstractions bore him, so do titles. Obviously "Mr. Baldwin thinks" is vividder than "the Prime Minister is of the opinion that," yet we find the greatest reluctance to give names and facts in articles dealing with subjects of any complexity. Often, no doubt, this is due to a desire for accuracy. Particular instances must sometimes be qualified in order to present a true statement. While admitting this, we should remember also that generalities poison the wells of conviction. They arouse a subconscious opposition in the mind of the reader instead of waking his sympathies.

The best style amongst amateurs, we have often noted, is to be found amongst the men or women of action. Nor is this remarkable, in view of the foregoing. Enthusiasm and courage will out in all forms of self-expression.

What marvellous stories could be written if the talk of adventurers could be written down as it is spoken by many a fireside! Unfortunately, the adventurer, pen in hand, thinks that he is attempting something beyond his powers in telling a plain story. He attempts to philosophize or analyse his feelings, or becomes self-conscious, and is lost. But this pen panic might be overcome perhaps if he were to dictate his story to an enthusiastic and intelligent listener. In describing an incident there should be a verb to almost every dozen words and a very minimum of adjectives.

The end of an article or short story should present little difficulty, for it must have been clearly visualized before ever the beginning is written. In other forms of authorship it may be different; a novelist, for instance, has room to allow his characters to take their own way, and their

unfolding may be as fascinating to him as it is to us. Within a limit of a few thousand words, such development is impossible. You have something to say, a mood to convey, a moral to point, a cause to urge: having said what you can and must, do not add a single sentence in support. A phrase too much is fatal.

From *The Spectator*

To Ralph W. Page

Tregenna Castle Hotel,
St. Ives, Cornwall,
March 12, 1918.

My dear Ralph:

Arthur has sent me Gardiner's 37-page sketch of American-British Concords and Discords—a remarkable sketch; and he has reminded me that your summer plan is to elaborate (into a popular style) your sketch of the same subject. You and Gardiner went over the same ground, each in a very good fashion. That's the fascinating task, and it opens up a wholly new vista of our History and of Anglo-Saxon, democratic history. Much lies ahead of that. And all this puts it in my mind to write you a little discourse on *style*. Gardiner has no style. He puts his facts down much as he would have noted on a blue print the facts about an engineering project that he sketched. The style of your article, which has much to be said for it as a magazine article, is not the best style for a book.

Now, this whole question of style—well, it's the gist of good writing. There's no really effective writing without it. Especially is this true of historical writing. Look at X Y Z's writings. He knows his American history and has

written much on it. He's written it as an Ohio blacksmith shoes a horse—not a touch of literary value in it all; all dry as dust—as dry as old Bancroft.

Style is good breeding—and art—in writing. It consists of the arrangement of your matter, first; then, more, of the gait; the manner and the manners of your expressing it. Work every group of facts, naturally and logically grouped to begin with, into a climax. Work every group up as a sculptor works out his idea or a painter, each group complete in itself. Throw out any superfluous facts or any merely minor facts that prevent the orderly working up of the group—that prevent or mar the effect you wish to present.

Then, when you've got a group thus presented, go over what you've made of it, to make sure you've used your material and its arrangement to the best effect, taking away merely extraneous or superfluous or distracting facts, here and there adding concrete illustrations—putting in a convincing detail here, and there a touch of colour.

Then go over it for your vocabulary. See that you use no word in a different meaning than it was used 100 years ago and will be used 100 years hence. You wish to use only the permanent words—words, too, that will be understood to carry the same meaning to English readers in every part of the world. Your vocabulary must be chosen from the permanent, solid, stable parts of the language.

Then see that no sentence contains a hint of obscurity.

Then go over the words you use to see if they be the best. Don't fall into merely current phrases. If you have a long word, see if a native short one can be put in its place which will be more natural and stronger. Avoid a Latin vocabulary and use a plain English one—short words instead of long ones.

Most of all, use *idioms*—English idioms of force. Say an agreement was “come to.” Don't say it was “consum-

mated." For the difference between idioms and a Latin style, compare Lincoln with George Washington. One's always interesting and convincing. The other is dull in spite of all his good sense. How most folk do misuse and waste words!

Freeman went too far in his use of one-syllable words. It became an affectation. But he is the only man I can think of that ever did go too far in that direction. X—— would have written a great history if he had had the natural use of idioms. As it is, he has good sense and no style; and his book isn't half so interesting as it would have been if he had some style—some proper value of short, clear-cut words that mean only one thing and that leave no vagueness.

You'll get a good style if you practise it. It is in your blood and temperament and way of saying things. But it's a high art and must be laboriously cultivated.

Yours affectionately,

W. H. P.

From *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page*

BURTON J. HENDRICK

(By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.)

"Books are a finer world within a world." For your next book of supplementary reading, choose a collection of essays by one of the following authors: Charles Lamb (*Elia*); A. G. Gardiner (*Alpha of the Plough*); Robert Lynd (Y.Y.); E. V. Lucas; G. K. Chesterton; W. H. Hudson; Hilaire Belloc; Max Beerbohm.

X

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERSONAL PROSE STYLE

Style is a means to an end, and only when its end is achieved can we perceive its beauty: indeed, its beauty is only the name we give to our recognition that its end has been achieved.

From *Pencillings*

J. MIDDLETON MURRY

I. Ideas and images

The writer, like the artist, selects details. His eye, like the lens of a camera, catches all the images in a scene, but his mind, unlike the film behind the lens, registers only those features which are significantly related to his special purpose or point of view. If the writer wishes to interest and convince the modern reader, he must present clear-cut ideas and images that can be starkly visualized. Mere ghosts of ideas and hazy or half-toned images persuade the reader of little more than the fact that the writer's thoughts were expressed before they were perfectly formed in his own mind and that, in the process of writing, his impressions had turned to jellies rather than to crystals. Two persons may see the same thing or hold the same opinion, but they do not react in the same way. It is the fresh and original way in which each writer views a subject or feels an emotion that produces the effect called style.

2. Words

Simple words appeal to the modern reader. "A spade digs deeper as a spade than as an agricultural implement." Clean, concise words that fit the idea as closely as a glove fits the hand, are not only economical but immediately intelligible. Connotative or suggestive words stir the imagination by their sounds and convince the intellect by their aptness. Flashes of thought and feeling can be struck out of a single word in a new and appropriate context. "Generalities poison the wells of conviction."

3. Phrases

Many writers and some critics consider the phrase to be the smallest unit of good prose. The prose of Robert Louis Stevenson and of Edgar Allen Poe abounds in phrases crisp and vigorous. Good phrases are composed of words in illuminating relationship to one another. They are additionally effective when placed to catch the reader's interest and sympathy. They are a delight in themselves when they induce expectancy and deliver surprise.

4. Figures of Speech

Figures of speech are not mere ornaments of discourse. They generally add beauty to the style, but their main purpose is to make the thought conveyed, more clear, or vivid, or emphatic. They should never be violent or high-sounding, but should fit naturally into the thought and its development. The use of similes and metaphors measures the range of a writer's imagination.

5. Rhythm

Rhythm has its origin in the way the idea is

thought—rhythm and thought are inseparable. The rhythm of poetry is as regular as the beating of waves upon the shore. The rhythm of prose is irregular and rises and falls as the wind through the forest. Read your prose aloud to make sure that its rhythm does not produce a sing-song effect. Its cadence should be pleasing to the ear.

6. Structure

A passage of prose should be balanced, proportioned and harmonious in all its parts. It should have objectivity, that is, it should be built up logically to a climax. Arranging ideas and images in a new pattern, is an imaginative and emotional enterprise. In proportion to the writer's ability to visualize his images, and to his capacity to respond emotionally to his subject, the reader will be impressed and swayed. Good prose is salted with vital imagery and enlivened by the zest of the writer.

7. A Personal Style

"For a man to write well, there are required three necessities: to read the best authors, observe the best speakers, and much exercise of his own style."

BEN JONSON

Contemporary prose style is concise, swift, subtle, flexible, sensitive, realistic, impressionistic, suggestive. These are a few of the effects to be found in some degree of excellence in any good book of recent publication, but if you ever want a style, it must be your own. To write a personal style, *be natural*. Do not try to reveal yourself as better than you are. Be yourself at your best. "A great portrait is always

more a portrait of the painter than the painted," wrote Samuel Butler. In every turn of phrase you will reveal your tastes and interests; in every image and metaphor, your experiences and preferences. In every comment and vision you will reflect your intellectual prowess and artistic sensibility. Never let your emotions get beyond control, or your imagination carry your thoughts out of reach. Art is restraint. If you go novelty-hunting or try to be flashy, your style will be affected or superficial rather than sincere. Good taste is the touchstone of good style.

SUBJECTS FOR ORAL COMPOSITION

How much do you know about each of the following subjects? Prepare the brief for a speech on the subject on which you feel most competent to speak. Be sure you choose a subject that will interest your audience.

The detection of icebergs. The discovery of radium. Radio broadcasting (the technical side). The educational value of music. The St. Lawrence waterway from the Ontario standpoint. Admiral Richard Byrd. Refining iron ore. Luenbok, the first of the microbe hunters. Disraeli, person and politician. Traders to the East. The fops of great inventors. Why go to the Arctic? Watches. Lt.-Col. Barker, V.C. Soviet Russia and the five-year plan. A wonder of the Twentieth Century—the electric eye. Tom Thomson, artist, naturalist and guide. The new North West. A hero of peace—Alexander Graham Bell. The rocket drive as a means of locomotion. The League of Nations—its achievements. Jasper National Park. Rats—Man's competitors for this earth. Marc Carlton, dreamer of wheat. The first flight from England to Australia—Capt. Ross Smith. Two famous naval battles of the Great War. The Welland Canal. Fretwork. Model shipbuilding. A day with the forest air patrol.

XI

HOW TO INTEREST THE READER

I. Words

Whenever the sense permits, use words that are beautiful in sound or suggestion. A word has not only meaning but character, quality and affiliations. Read aloud this list of words and state to what each owes its beauty—to melody, thought, emotion, or suggestion:

adoration, adventure, asphodel, ambrosial, autumnal, blossom, brotherhood, blessedness, crimson, cheerily, clarion, daffodil, Elysium, forgiveness, fountain, freedom, fellowship, glimmering, harmony, infinite, immemorial, ivory, jubilee, labyrinth, lullaby, merrily, multitude, miracle, oriental, primeval, pinnacle, pageantry, paradise, remember, romantic, sacrament, splendour, symphony, vermilion, wonderful, woodland.

Add to the foregoing list of beautiful words.

II. Phrases

What pictures are to a living room, neat and colourful phrases are to a piece of prose. They please, they interest, they guide the reader to the thoughts, feelings and tastes of the writer. Unfortunately, they soon grow stale and out-of-date and will not bear repeating very often. Every writer must invent his own, but his effort is immediately

rewarded. Fresh and original phrases, the little pictures of good prose, interest and delight the reader.

The following phrases were gathered from three modern essays. From your own reading add to this list:

(a) a raven's warning, depressingly normal, blurred reflections, nominal nobility, imbecile extravagance, painfully credible, selfish copyists, excessive kindness, respectable antiquity, blind credulity, deadly conventionalism, sudden amazement, selfish prudence, mutual enhancement, high-soaring courage, sudden eloquence.

(b) nimble and elusive, direct and crashing, intolerance and persecution, alert and sensitive, fanciful and false, buoyant and optimistic, shame and confusion, clearness and beauty, energy and daring, mincing and repellant.

(c) accusation of malice, mist of desires, air of intimacy, sea-beaten tooth of rock, plea for justice, freedom from bias, beset with pitfalls, aids to forgetfulness, established by usage.

EXERCISE I

1. Incorporate in a phrase each of these nouns:
obeisance, priority, reprisal, redolence, efficacy, virulence, propinquity, impunity, enchantment.
2. Incorporate in a phrase each of these adjectives:
strident, adroit, obsequious, importunate, stringent, tenacious, vindictive, acute, relentless, felicitous, fulgent.

III. Figures of Speech

The chief use of figures of speech is to make the thought more clear, emphatic or pleasing. The

reader is always grateful, however, to the writer who awakens his imagination. For this purpose, figures of speech are the device most frequently used, and of these the most common are the simile and the metaphor.

A simile is an expressed comparison, introduced by *like* or *as*. A metaphor is an implied comparison. Too many sparkling words and glittering phrases make a piece of prose as odious as a woman laden with jewelry. Too many flashing similes make it look like a man in motley. Metaphors give depth and richness to prose style, but too many metaphors short-circuit the thought. A mixed metaphor like "the hand that rocked the cradle kicked the bucket" is as absurd as it is incongruous. One of the enemies of sincerity is the modern urge for glitter and cleverness in prose composition. The glittering writer is always anxious to strike attitudes, to sparkle, to be saying continually to his reader: "Remark that admirable phrase, that arresting epithet, that bright conceit, that startling simile—am I not clever?" The reader of such cleverness does not say as he reads, "What clear, good thought!" but, rather, "Why, on earth, does he say what he has to say so oddly?" The essence of art is restraint; restraint is always in good taste.

Distinguish between the following similes and metaphors excerpted from modern prose for your study and delight:

I hate to run down a tired metaphor.

Inconspicuous as a new filling station

Slick as an oyster in a bottle of castor oil

Mean as the man who gave a homing pigeon for a birthday present

Practical as a bank

Bores are like dentists' drills.

Preoccupied as a pig when its trough is filled.

They resemble each other about as closely as an alligator
pear does an alligator.

Useless as a loose tooth

Infatuation, like paralysis, is often all on one side.

There are many minds that are like a sheet of thin ice.
You have to skate on them pretty rapidly or you'll go
through. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Writing is like pulling the trigger of a gun: if you are
not loaded nothing happens. HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

The human mind should be like a good hotel—open
the year round. WILLIAM LYON PHELPS

Sprawling like a wet mosquito

Subtle as the tapping of a pile-driver

Forgotten as a flame up a chimney

He set his imagination adrift.

He felt like the symptoms on a medicine bottle.

Swift summer into autumn flowed.

The river sang with its lips to the pebbles.

About as much privacy as a statue in the park

Fear held him as in a vise.

Her tongue stumbled and was silent.

Out of date as yesterday's shave

Hopelessness submerged her.

His forehead was corrugated in thought.

Wistful as a letter lying unclaimed

Her eyes danced with malice.

Anxiety followed her like a ghost.

The sea moaned and tossed like an awakened conscience.

A gesture stemmed the tide of words.

The sky twinkled with frosty stars.

One thought pressed itself insistently.

His ideas are as set as concrete.

The wind now and then came like a giant night-bird
beating its wings against the windows.

He probed character with a glance.

Stale as last year's telephone book

When the signal went green the traffic swarmed and lurched forward like a flock of sheep driven through the opening in a fence.

He flitted about from one traffic line to another with the gay abandon of a dragon fly in June.

Conversation will come and go in little warm waves of happy understanding that meet and leap as they cross each other.

ROBERT LYND

He was breathing hard, his mouth open, his eyes full of torment his skin sodden and dull bluish-white like a laundress's hands after a day in hot water and soda.

C. E. MONTAGUE

Reading without purpose is sauntering, not exercise. More is got from one book on which the thought settles for a definite end in knowledge, than from libraries skimmed over by a wandering eye. A cottage flower gives honey to the bee, a king's garden none to the butterfly.

LORD LYTTON

EXERCISE I

1. Select from the foregoing list, figures which give to the ideas they illustrate (a) clearness, (b) picturesqueness, (c) emphasis, (d) unexpectedness.

2. Change six of the similes given above to metaphors and six of the metaphors to similes.

3. Give the literal meaning of six words that are used above metaphorically.

4. "The sun shines brightly", is a plain statement. Make it more forcible and striking by the use of a simile or a metaphor.

5. Make similes and metaphors on the following images: a fast express; a slow freight; a bus; a five-ton truck on a rough road; a modern apartment house; a new building district; a department store; a gasoline refilling station; windows in the

shopping district; a news stand; a railway station; a country road; a blizzard; an insurance agent; the family doctor; happiness; sullenness; generosity; niggardliness; the radio.

6. Use the following words in a metaphorical sense to make clear, emphatic and picturesque statements: plough, goad, shine, flung, balm, arrows, vault, journey, cloud, built, horizon, tree, flash.

EXERCISE 2

The simile and the metaphor are based on resemblances or comparisons; antithesis and epigram are also figures of speech, but they are based on unlikenesses or contrasts. In the antithesis, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread", a noun is contrasted with a noun, and a verb with a verb. In the epigram "The child is father of the man", there is an apparent contradiction between the intended meaning and the expressed meaning. Distinguish between antithesis and epigram in the following quotations:

Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just.

A favourite has no friend.

Some praise at morning what they blame at night.

Well begun is half done.

Silence is deep as eternity; speech is shallow as time.

To err is human; to forgive, divine.

Brevity is the soul of wit.

He that would govern others must first be master of himself.

EXERCISE 3

Irony is the subtlest form of satire. It states a meaning opposite to the one intended. What is really meant by each of the following quotations? Where is the sting?

That certificate should be framed.

The summer has set in with its usual severity.

Rail at him abundantly; and not to break a custom, do it without wit.

Mr. Winston Churchill has devoted the best years of his life to the preparation of his impromptu speeches.

Bring to class examples of antithesis, epigram, and irony, which you have found in your reading of Shakespeare, Pope, and Swift.

Figures of speech are like fish; they run to many varieties. Some are as common as shad; others are as strange as the names we know them by—metonymy, synecdoche, apostrophe, hyperbole, oxymoron, paradox, transferred epithet, antonomasia, onomatopoeia.

IV. Humour

One might as well try to define life as define humour. Like style, it is chiefly a matter of effect, and each writer employs his own peculiar devices to produce it. Shakespeare, Swift, Goldsmith, Dickens, and Lamb, all used exaggeration and caricature. They placed extremes in juxtaposition, described incongruous situations, and revealed the absurdities of eccentric people. Their humorous characters were placed at a disadvantage and caught in the entanglements and contradictions of human life. Their humour sometimes took its origin in a confession of weakness or a premeditated vagueness, but seldom did it begin or end in vulgarity, profanity, sacrilege or unkindness.

English literature abounds in passages of wit and humour. Study the following examples and try to discover to what devices each owes its effect:

A.

I have no ear.—

Mistake me not, reader,—nor imagine that I am by

nature destitute of those exterior twin appendages, hanging ornaments, and (architecturally speaking) handsome volutes to the human capital. Better my mother had never borne me.—I am, I think rather delicately than copiously provided with those conduits; and I feel no disposition to envy the mule for his plenty, or the mole for her exactness, in those ingenious labyrinthine inlets—those indispensable side-intelligencers.

Neither have I incurred, nor done anything to incur, with Defoe, that hideous disfigurement, which constrained him to draw upon assurance—to feel “quite unabashed,” and at ease upon that article. I was never, I thank my stars, in the pillory; nor, if I read them aright, is it within the compass of my destiny, that I ever should be.

When therefore I say that I have no ear, you will understand me to mean—for *music*. CHARLES LAMB
From *Essays of Elia*: “A Chapter on Ears”

B.

A poor relation—is the most irrelevant thing in nature,—a piece of impertinent correspondency,—an odious approximation,—a haunting conscience,—a preposterous shadow, lengthening in the noontide of our prosperity,—an unwelcome remembrancer,—a perpetually recurring mortification,—a drain on your purse,—a more intolerable dun upon your pride,—a drawback upon success,—a rebuke to your rising,—a stain in your blood,—a blot on your 'scutcheon,—a rent in your garment,—a death's head at your banquet,—Agathocles' pot,—a Mordecai in your gate,—a Lazarus at your door,—a lion in your path,—a frog in your chamber,—a fly in your ointment,—a mote in your eye,—a triumph to your enemy,—an apology to your friends,—the one thing not needful,—the hail in harvest,—the ounce of sour in a pound of sweet.

He is known by his knock. Your heart telleth you

"That is Mr.——." A rap, between familiarity and respect; that demands, and at the same time seems to despair of, entertainment. He entereth smiling and—embarrassed. He holdeth out his hand to you to shake, and—draweth it back again. He casually looketh in about dinner-time—when the table is full. He offereth to go away, seeing you have company—but is induced to stay. He filleth a chair, and your visitor's two children are accommodated at a side table.

CHARLES LAMB

From *Essays of Elia*: "Poor Relations"

C.

A False Accusation

I was always on the eve of being dismissed, and yet was always striving to show how good a public servant I could become, if only a chance were given me. But the chance went the wrong way. On one occasion, in the performance of my duty, I had to put a private letter containing bank-notes on the secretary's table, which letter I had duly opened, as it was not marked Private. The letter was seen by the colonel, but had not been moved by him when he left the room. On his return it was gone. In the meantime I had returned to the room again, in the performance of some duty. When the letter was missed I was sent for, and there I found the colonel much moved about this letter, and a certain chief clerk, who, with a long face, was making suggestions as to the probable fate of the money. "The letter has been taken," said the colonel, turning to me angrily, "and, by G—! there has been nobody in the room but you and I." As he spoke he thundered his fist down upon the table. "Then," said I, "by G—! you have taken it," and I also thundered my fist down—but, accidentally, not upon the table. There was there a standing movable desk, at which, I presume, it was the colonel's habit to write, and on this movable desk was a large bottleful of ink. My fist unfortunately came on the desk and the ink at once flew

up, covering the colonel's face and shirt-front. Then it was a sight to see that senior clerk, as he seized a quire of blotting-paper, and rushed to the aid of his superior officer, striving to mop up the ink; and a sight also to see the colonel, in his agony, hit right out through the blotting paper at that senior clerk's unoffending stomach. At that moment there came in the colonel's private secretary, with the letter and the money, and I was desired to go back to my own room.

From *The Autobiography of Anthony Trollope*

(By permission of the publishers, Oxford University Press.)

D.

We are very fond of pine-apple, all three of us. We looked at the picture on the tin; we thought of the juice. We smiled at one another, and Harris got a spoon ready.

Then we looked for the knife to open the tin with. We turned out everything in the hamper. We turned out the bags. We pulled up the boards at the bottom of the boat. We took everything out on the bank and shook it. There was no tin-opener to be found.

Then Harris tried to open the tin with a pocket knife, and broke the knife and cut himself badly; and George tried a pair of scissors, and the scissors flew up, and nearly put his eye out. While they were dressing their wounds, I tried to make a hole in the thing with the spiky end of the hitcher, and the hitcher slipped and jerked me out between the boat and the bank into two feet of muddy water, and the tin rolled over, uninjured, and broke a teacup.

Then we all got mad. We took the tin out on the bank, and Harris went up into a field and got a big sharp stone, and I went back into the boat and brought out the mast, and George held the tin and Harris held the sharp end of his stone against the top of it, and I took the mast and poised it high up in the air, and gathered up all my strength and brought it down.

It was George's straw hat that saved his life that day. He keeps that hat now (what is left of it), and, of a winter's evening, when the pipes are lit and the boys are telling stretchers about the dangers they have passed through, George brings it down and shows it round, and the stirring tale is told anew, with fresh exaggerations every time.

Harris got off with merely a flesh wound.

After that, I took the tin myself, and hammered at it with the mast till I was worn out and sick at heart, whereupon Harris took it in hand.

We beat it out flat; we beat it back square; we battered it into every form known to geometry—but we could not make a hole in it. Then George went at it, and knocked it into a shape, so strange, so weird, so unearthly in its wild hideousness, that he got frightened and threw away the mast. Then we all three sat around it on the grass and looked at it.

JEROME K. JEROME

From *Three Men in a Boat*

(By permission of the publishers,
J. W. Arrowsmith (London) Ltd.)

E.

The boar-pig had drawn nearer to the gate for a closer inspection of the human intruders, and stood champing his jaws and blinking his small red eyes in a manner that was doubtless intended to be disconcerting, and, as far as the Stossens were concerned, thoroughly achieved that result.

"Shoo! Hish! Hish! Shoo!" cried the ladies in chorus.

"If they think they're going to drive him away by reciting lists of the kings of Israel and Judah they're laying themselves out for disappointment," observed Matilda from her seat in the medlar tree. As she made the observation aloud Mrs. Stossen became for the first time aware of her presence. A moment or two earlier she would have been anything but pleased at the discovery that the garden was not as deserted as it looked, but now she hailed the fact of

the child's presence on the scene with absolute relief.

From *Beasts and Super-Beasts* SAKI (H. H. MUNRO)

(By permission of the publishers,
John Lane The Bodley Head Limited.)

EXERCISE

1. The crew of a railway train are suddenly transplanted to a farm. Recount their experiences in managing a team of horses or the livestock in general.

2. An automobile mechanic suddenly turns veterinarian. Describe his methods of treatment.

3. I shall never forget my first lesson in golf.

4. The boy next door is learning to play the saxaphone. Describe the change that has come over the neighbourhood.

5. Write an account of the most humorous incident you have ever witnessed.

6. Relate the most amusing story you have ever heard.

7. Describe a practical joke.

8. Tell an anecdote in which the central image is a canoe, a dog, a hat, a camp fire, a teacher, a tennis player, a radio announcer, a physician, a paper hanger, or a private secretary.

9. Relate briefly and with point an amusing incident from the funniest story you have ever read or from the funniest moving picture you have ever seen.

10. Write an amusing account of a dream.

11. Describe the funniest cartoon you have seen.

12. Describe an adventure in mistaken identity.

13. Describe the experiences of Julius Caesar shopping in a modern store.

V. Invention

The way to write is to write about nothing. . . . The subject needn't be interesting. It's the author who has got to be interesting.

From *Landmarks*

E. V. LUCAS

Invention is the finding of a thing in its more or less obscure hiding-place; creation is the making of a new thing, the invocation of Something from Nothingness.

From *Hieroglyphics*

ARTHUR MACHEN

Literary devices will not make up for poverty of ideas. If you are interested in life, in people and conditions, in deeds and their motives, in conversation and reading; if, moreover, you are interested in your own ideas, you will seldom want for the material from which good writing is made. Keep your eyes and ears open and your mind awake! "The demand of the intellect is to feel itself alive." Take note of every sensation! Let your fancy range! Keep faith in yourself! Pursue your subject until it has given up its last item of human interest! Your personal reactions to life and your reflections upon it, may be as interesting and valuable as any that have ever been written. But you must have a purpose, an aim, or a point of view, and, in accordance with it, you must choose from the material you have gathered. Rejection is just as important as selection. To be exact in your observations, is not enough. Your thoughts and impressions must be arranged in a logical and imaginative unit, warmed by your attendant emotions and coloured by your personal reflections. Ask yourself: Why does this particular image or incident interest me? What feelings do I

naturally associate with it? What pictures does it paint in my imagination? What are my reflections upon it? Why should my reader be interested in it?

| <u>Image</u> | <u>Sensation</u> | <u>Imagination</u> | <u>Reflection</u> |
|--------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| airplane | speed | like a bird | man has conquered the air |

As you study the following models, distinguish between observation and invention, and between imagination and reflection. Show how each writer has probed his subject for elements of human interest. What sensations are aroused by the reading of each passage? Pick out suggestive and colourful words and phrases. Choose adjectives to describe the style of each passage and the personality of each writer.

A.

"Taste This!"

If I were talking to you this morning instead of writing, my tones would be of the mincing, early Victorian, prunes and prisms variety. A few minutes ago I was asked to "Taste This," and my mouth is now puckered up like the end of the button bag after the drawstring has been pulled. At the present time the wild-plum jam is being made. This year the wild plums are tart and acrid beyond all whooping. It is probably due to the long dry spell, but, whatever the cause, they have an astringent juice that would even pucker the lip of a stone jug. I think it even puckered the spoon in which the stuff was handed to me, but I will not insist on this. The spoon may have been dented in some other way.

From *Around Home*

PETER MCARTHUR

(By permission of the publishers,

J. M. Dent & Sons Limited.)

B.

A Door-Handle

To write an essay on a door-handle one must be poetically minded, for it is only the poetic mind which can find "books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in everything". It alone can cast aside the veil of external superficialities to look upon life as it really is, and discover the beauties and potentialities of familiar things. For there are in truth two worlds, the one visible and transient, the other full of meaning—permanent. Yet they are so intermingled that everything is a part of both—nothing is meaningless, and beneath the most prosaic exterior there is something full of interest and of wonder. So it is with the door-handle. Beneath the tarnish which neglectful years have put upon it; or beneath the proud polish of numerous domestics, rests a host of associations. In the door-handle is to be found the whole spirit and personality of the house to which it belongs. As the house changes so does the door-handle. Who does not know the white door-knobs of the old-fashioned drawing-room, symbolic in their solidity of the Victorians themselves; or the fussy, shining little knobs gracing the doors of every villa in Suburbia, and embodying the very sparkle and pertness of every provincial housewife? Yes, the door-handle is indeed a symbol, and like all other symbols it has its mysteries; but to the initiated they are no longer mysteries but a revelation.

G. A. TAYLOR, *The Bookman*

C.

To My Old Hiking Shoes

It is a funeral pyre, not an ordinary rubbish heap, and I cannot give you to the flames without a backward glance at the days we spent together.

Do you remember the slopes of slippery pine needles that you trod so surely, the great fallen tree trunks and boulders over which you scrambled? All your scars are

honourable. You never failed me on the roughest trails; on glistening deck and spray-glazed rocks you were as steady as on the level beach.

What adventures we have known! There was that perfect June day when we forded the noisy creek, and a great silver bass, mistaking you for a couple of his fellows, edged closer until he was nuzzling your toes! And then you hung astride the rustic verandah railing of a certain small log cabin, glistening like Cinderella's slippers, until you were dried by the wind that made music in the nearby pines, and teased the water lapping on the rocks below.

Let's not forget the morning we hunted orange lilies. The wild cherry showered its snowy petals on our path, and the flowers we sought, glowing on the green slopes, tempted us on and up. We went home drenched with dew and that peace which fills the wilderness at sunrise.

But, best memory of all is the day when with one other we scaled Lookout Rock. How joyously we climbed, laughing breathlessly as we overcame each obstacle. It was steep and rugged, but surely, without a slip, you brought me to the very peak. But, ah, you brought me down again, alone. Down from the height of Lookout, down from the highlands of the north, down into this southern valley of Reality, so far, so very far from all my dreams!

And you, travel-worn and weary, have come to rest on this bonfire at the foot of an orchard. The eager little flames leap toward you. I see you writhe at first, then settle down contentedly. Now little curls of blue smoke are rising from you. You'll go to make the sunsets that linger vividly behind the pines. At night you'll drift, a luminous veil, across the moon, and your shadow will touch the waters of the little lake. Some day, I think, I'll join you there, and we'll wander on again together through the haunts we loved.

MARION ROWLAND
From *The Home Forum*, *The Globe*, where it first
appeared on the *Homemaker's* page.

D.

Wanton Intrusion

Much has been said by various humane persons about the cruelty of fishing. . . . Let us see how the case stands. I take a little wool and feather, and tying it in a particular manner upon a hook, make an imitation of a fly; then I throw it across the river, and let it sweep round the stream with a lively motion. This I have an undoubted right to do, for the river belongs to me or my friend; but mark what follows. Up starts a monster fish with his murderous jaws, and makes a dash at my little Andromeda. Thus he is the aggressor, not I; his intention is evidently to commit murder. He is caught in the act of putting that intention into execution. Having wantonly intruded himself on my hook, which I contend he had no right to do, he darts about in various directions, evidently surprised to find that the fly, which he hoped to make an easy conquest of, is much stronger than himself. I naturally attempt to regain this fly, unjustly withheld from me. The fish gets tired and weak in his lawless endeavours to deprive me of it. I take advantage of his weakness, I own. I drag him, somewhat loth, to the shore, where one rap at the back of the head ends him in an instant. If he is a trout, I find his stomach distended with flies. That beautiful one called the May-fly, who is by nature almost ephemeral, who rises up from the bottom of the shallows, spreads its light wings, and flits in the sunbeam in enjoyment of its new existence, no sooner descends to the surface of the water to deposit its eggs, than the unfeeling fish at one fell spring numbers him prematurely with the dead. You see, then, what a wretch a fish is; no ogre is more bloodthirsty, for he will devour his own nephews, nieces, and even his own children, when he can catch them; and I take some credit for having shown him up. Talk of a wolf, indeed, a lion, or a tiger! Why these are mild and saintly in comparison with a fish. When did anyone hear of Messrs. Wolf, Lion and Co., eating up

their grandchildren? What a bitter fright must the smaller fry live in! They crowd the shallows, lie hid among the weeds, and dare not say the river is their own. I relieve them of their apprehensions, and thus become popular with the small shoals.

WILLIAM SCROPE

From *Days and Nights of Salmon Fishing in the Tweed*

(By permission of the publishers, Herbert Jenkins, Ltd.)

EXERCISE

1. Make a list of the thoughts, pictures and feelings which occur to you at the mention of each of the following words:

wheat, apple, orange, forest, book, picture, teacher, bank, table, barn, traveller, monster.

2. What sensations do you associate with each of the following:

swimming, skating, reading, buying meat, eating ice cream, watching an acrobat, having your hair cut, going to the dentist, ordering a suit of clothes, buying a pair of shoes.

3. What human interest may be found in each of the following subjects? Write a short article on one of these topics, using every device you know to interest your reader:

The engine room of a liner in mid ocean; a journey across the Sahara Desert in an airplane; Little York in 1830 (an incident); an Ontario port 100 years ago (an incident); The reign of terror was at an end (a topic sentence); Drake and the game of bowls; my experience as a tax collector; a day in a coal mine; a miser in his garret; a window; a chimney; a fountain pen; an old hat; on the prospect of reading a book; on making a collection of butterflies.

One sure test of your ability to invent, is to write a fable. A fable has an expressed and an implied meaning or moral. In some fables dumb creatures

and even inanimate things are given the power of speech.

Models for study:

A.

A Fable

A certain man sought the most beautiful rose on his tree for his only child. And coming to the first flower, he looked at it and said, "This rose hath but a poor scent, and though its rich crimson colour is fair to the eye, yet I will not have it." Then he came to another flower and said, "This flower hath lost one of its green leaves, and therefore its delicate perfume is of no value to me; I will not have it." And looking at a third, he saw that one of its outer cream-coloured petals had fallen, and he spoke in like manner. And it chanced that a stranger passing that way said to him, "What a marvellous fragrance cometh from that tree! Thou art a fortunate man to possess such beauty!" But he answering, said, "The perfume is of no account to me in that this rose hath lost one of its petals." But the stranger said, "Those petals are as smooth as ivory, and their colour as soft as the evening clouds," and plucking the rose he placed it against its own leaves so that they covered the space where the petal had been. "Look upon it," said the stranger, "and justly praise a thing of beauty."

Watch therefore for the good things, that goodness may come out to meet you.

CATHERINE DRYWOOD, *The Bookman*

B.

I. The Stopped Clock

Once upon a time there was a discredited politician whose nostrums no longer took anyone in. And being thrown out of office he wandered about, seeking like many men before him, for comfort and consolation among his inferiors. These, however, failing him, he passed on to the lower animals, and from them to the inanimate, until he

came one day to a clock which, the works having been removed, consisted only of a case, a face, and two hands.

"Ha!" said the politician, as he stood before it, "at last I have found something beyond question and argument more useless than myself. For you, my friend, are done. I, at any rate, still have life and movement. I can speak and act; I have a function still to perform in the world; whereas you are a mockery and a sham."

"Kindly," the clock replied, "refrain from associating me with yourself. I decline the comparison. Lifeless I may be, but not useless. For two separate moments every day I am absolutely right, and for some minutes approximately right; whereas you, sir, are, have been, and will be, consistently wrong."

II. *Truth and Another*

She came towards me rather dubiously, as though not sure of her reception.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Truth," she said.

I apologized for not having realized it.

"Never mind," she said wearily, "hardly anyone knows me. I'm always having to explain who I am, and lots of people don't understand then."

A little later I met her again.

"Well, I shan't make any mistake this time," I said.

"How are you, Miss Truth?"

"You are misinformed," she replied coldly; "my name is Libel."

"But you're exactly like Truth," I exclaimed—"exactly!"

"Hush!" she said.

From *Old Lamps for New*

E. V. LUCAS

(By permission of the author and the publishers,

Methuen & Co., Ltd.)

C.

The Hen

All along the farmyard gables the swallows sat a-row, twittering uneasily to one another, telling of many things, but thinking only of Summer and the South, for Autumn was afoot and the North wind waiting.

And suddenly one day they were all quite gone. And everyone spoke of the swallows and the South.

"I think I shall go South myself next year," said a hen.

And the year wore on and the swallows came again, and the year wore on and they sat again on the gables, and all the poultry discussed the departure of the hen.

And very early one morning, the wind being from the North, the swallows all soared suddenly and felt the wind in their wings; and a strength came upon them and a strange old knowledge and a more than human faith, and flying high they left the smoke of our cities and small remembered eaves, and saw at last the huge and homeless sea, and steering by gray sea-currents went southward with the wind. And going South, they went by glittering fog-banks and saw old islands lifting their heads above them; they saw the slow quests of the wandering ships, and divers seeking pearls, and lands at war, till there came in view the mountains that they sought and the sight of the peaks they knew; and they descended into an austral valley, and saw Summer sometimes sleeping and sometimes singing song.

"I think the wind is about right," said the hen; and she spread her wings and ran out of the poultry-yard. And she ran fluttering out on to the road and some way down it until she came to a garden.

At evening she came back panting.

And in the poultry-yard she told the poultry how she had gone South as far as the highroad, and saw the great world's traffic going by, and came to lands where the potato grew, and saw the stubble upon which men live, and at the

end of the road had found a garden, and there were roses in it—beautiful roses!—and the gardener himself was there with his braces on.

“How extremely interesting,” the poultry said, “and what a really beautiful description!”

And the Winter wore away, and the bitter months went by, and the Spring of the year appeared and the swallows came again.

“We have been to the South,” they said, “and the valleys beyond the sea.”

But the poultry would not agree that there was a sea in the South: “You should hear our hen,” they said.

From *Fifty-one Tales*

LORD DUNSANY

(Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.)

EXERCISE

Try to write a fable around one of the following subjects: a cloud, a mountain, a river, Father Winter, a cow-bird, a spider, a parrot.

VI. Dialogue

Direct narration brightens and enlivens a piece of prose. In studying the following models, examine closely the paragraphing. Is every speech natural and consistent with the character? Has the writer a single point of view? Are the speeches arranged in an ascending and dramatic order? What human interest has the writer invented? In what does the humour consist—situation, character, or speech?

A.

How to Throw Off an Article

“Do you really write?” said Sylvia, gazing at me large-eyed with wonder. I admitted as much.

“And do they print it just as you write it?”

"Well, their hired grammarians make a few trifling alterations to justify their existence."

"And do they pay you quite a lot?"

"Sixpence a word."

"Oo! How wonderful!"

"But not for every word," I added hastily, "only the really funny ones."

"And they send it to you by checks?"

"Rather. I bought a couple of pairs of socks with the last story; even then I had something left over."

"And how do you write the stories?"

"Oh, just get an idea and go right ahead."

"How wonderful! Do you just sit down and write it straight off?"

I just—only just—pulled myself up in time as I remembered that Sylvia was an enthusiast of twelve whose own efforts had already caused considerable comment in the literary circles described round the High School. I felt this entitled her to some claim on my veracity.

"Sylvia," I cried, "I shall have to make a confession. All those stories you have been good enough to read and occasionally smile over are the result of a cold-blooded mechanical process—and the help of a dictionary of synonyms."

"Oo! How wonderful! Do show me how!"

"Very well. Since you are going to be a literary giantess it is well that you should be initiated into the mysteries of producing what I shall call the illusion of spontaneity. Now take this story here. Here on this old envelope is the idea."

"Oo! Let me see. I can't read a word!"

"Of course you can't; nobody could. Rough copies are divided into classes as follows:—

"No. 1. Those I can read, but nobody else can.

"No. 2. Those I can't read myself after two days.

"No. 3. Those my typist can read.

"This story is about a certain Brigade Major who is an inveterate leg-puller. Some Americans are expected to be coming for instruction. Well, before they arrive the Brigade Major has to go up to the line, and on his way he meets a man with a very new tin hat who asks him in a certain nasal accent we have all come to love if he has seen anything of a party of Americans. Spotting him as a new chum, the Brigade Major offers to show him round the line, and proceeds to pull his leg and tells him the most preposterous nonsense. For instance, on a shot being fired miles away he pretends they are in frightful danger, and leads him bent double round and round trenches in the same circle."

"What a shame!"

"Wasn't it? Well, when he gets tired he asks the American if he thinks he has learnt anything. The American says, 'Gee, I've been out here two years now, but I guess you've taught me a whole heap I didn't know. I'm a Canadian tunneller, you know, and I've got to show some Americans our work, but I guess I've had a most interesting time with you.' "

"Ha! ha!"

"Well now, to put the story into its form. Here's Copy No. 1, on this old envelope. 'Americans coming—Brigade Major sees American looking for party—pulls his leg—pretends to being in frightful danger—American is Canadian who has been out two years.' See? Copy No. 2. Here we begin to fill in. Describe Brigade headquarters and previous leg-pulls of Brigade Major. Make up details of what he tells the American—"That's a trench. That thing you fell over is a coil of wire. This is a sunken road—we sunk it, etc., etc.' Copy No. 3, additions and details, little touches of local colour, revision of choice of words, heartrending erasures. And here my child," I concluded, bringing out the beautiful, clean, smooth typed copy—"here is the finished work itself, light pleasant, fluent, humorous and, most important of all, spontaneous."

"Oo! But how awfully cold-blooded. I thought you smiled to yourself all the time you wrote it."

"My dear girl, it takes hours. If I smiled continually all that length of time the top of my head would come off."

"Isn't it wonderful? Fancy building it all up from jottings on an old envelope! What's that piece of paper you took out of the typed copy?"

"Oh, that's nothing to do with the literary side of it," I said, crumbling up the little memorandum, which said that the Editor presented compliments and regretted that he was unable to make use of the enclosed contribution.

From *Punch*

(Reprinted by permission of the Proprietors.)

B.

Cats!

Montmorency went for that poor cat at the rate of twenty miles an hour; but the cat did not hurry up—did not seem to have grasped the idea that its life was in danger. It trotted quietly on until its would-be assassin was within a yard of it, and then it turned round and sat down in the middle of the road, and looked at Montmorency with a gentle, inquiring expression, that said:

"Yes! You want me?"

Montmorency does not lack pluck; but there was something about the look of that cat that might have chilled the heart of the boldest dog. He stopped abruptly, and looked back at Tom.

Neither spoke; but the conversation that one could imagine was clearly as follows:—

The Cat: "Can I do anything for you?"

Montmorency: "No—no, thanks."

The Cat: "Don't you mind speaking, if you really want anything, you know."

Montmorency (*backing down the High Street*): "Oh,

no—not at all—certainly—don't you trouble. I—I am afraid I've made a mistake. I thought I knew you. Sorry I disturbed you."

The Cat: "Not at all—quite a pleasure. Sure you don't want anything, now?"

Montmorency (*still backing*): "Not at all, thanks—not at all—very kind of you. Good morning."

The Cat: "Good morning."

Then the cat rose, and continued his trot; and Montmorency, fitting what he calls his tail carefully into its groove, came back to us, and took up an unimportant position in the rear.

To this day, if you say the word "Cats!" to Montmorency, he will visibly shrink and look up piteously at you, as if to say:

"Please don't."

From *Three Men in a Boat*

JEROME K. JEROME

(By permission of the publishers,
J. W. Arrowsmith (London) Ltd.)

C.

The Pickwickians Disport Themselves on the Ice
(*Mr. Winkle had bragged of his prowess as
an athlete and a skater.*)

All this time Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet, and putting his skates on with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state, with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone; "off with you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently, and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made, at the instant, of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates; ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I'm afeerd there's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em, sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come; the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle with a ghastly smile; "I am coming."

"Just a-goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam," gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle, hastily; "you needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You're wery good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam; will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam; not too fast."

Mr. Winkle, stooping forward with his body half

doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller, in a very singular and unswanlike manner, when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank,—

“Sam!”

“Sir?” said Mr. Weller.

“Here. I want you.”

“Let go, sir,” said Sam. “Don’t you hear the governor a-callin’? Let go, sir.”

With a violent effort, Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonized Pickwickian, and in so doing administered a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity or practice could have ensured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet, but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile; but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

CHARLES DICKENS

From *Pickwick Papers*

EXERCISE

Report a conversation between:

a motorist and a traffic policeman; a tourist and a pedestrian; a doctor and his patient; a pupil and his principal; a girl and her mother (discussing the “movies”); a milliner and a customer; a lawyer and his client; a farmer and a merchant (discussing “daylight saving”); a dog and a cat.

VII. Suspense

Distinguish between *suspense* and *surprise*. Suspense involves a climax—a series of steps leading to the top of a ladder.

Aim

To withhold the secret and keep the reader wondering until the very end. To insert slight anticipatory hints, suggest clues which the reader may take as forecasts of the final outcome, but to avoid telling too much—the reader must not guess the solution.

Method

Do not begin to write until you have a clear idea of how the story is to end. Then write down the final sentence in neat and telling phrases. Arrange the incidents or impressions in an ascending series and increase the rapidity of the movement as you approach the climax. Like a good runner, you should save a little breath for the final spurt.

Next to the conclusion, the beginning ranks highest in importance. Introductions are superfluous. Do not begin with Noah, even if everything can be traced back to the Flood. Formal or didactic openings are repellant. "The uses of a safety-pin are many and various" will not prick the reader's interest, but "I thought I knew Bill very well" strikes the keynote and plunges the reader into the subject. To catch the interest is not enough; you must lure the reader along, keep him on the scent. Avoid making rash promises, however, which you cannot fulfil.

Between the beginning and the climax, extraneous material should not be introduced. Beware of anticlimax. All the details should be carefully chosen and fitted together to produce a single effect. One or two sentences of well chosen description, how-

ever, will give body and colour to your story, and a few telling phrases will give it force and point. A bit of dialogue may add to the human interest, but even this must play a definite part in the development of the subject.

The title of a story is like the smear of jam on the outside of the jar, a foretaste of the good things within. "How Jim Caught the Fish", is flat, but "The Mark of the Beast" whets the interest and intrigues the imagination.

Effect

Repress all sentiment. State the facts and let the story create its own effect. Atmosphere comes from emotional restraint. Some details are more effective by their absence than if they were written in italics.

EXERCISE

What are the merits of "The Intruder" given below? Examine it under these headings:

suspense, beginning, climax, development, clues, title, and restraint.

Underline all the effective words and phrases that enhance the interest of the story. How much of the effect depends on surprise?

The Intruder

The party was proceeding very successfully. Everyone was having a delightful time and refreshments were just being served when a loud bang sounded on the wall. All were petrified—not an eyelash quivered. Abject terror was depicted upon every countenance;—he had come again! All could feel, in imagination, the cruel glare of his glassy eye as he strove to force his way into their tiny

home. He certainly had not been invited but there he was. Everything in the room shook, and the sound of his blows reverberated through the passage-ways. The frightened inmates scurried to and fro in desperation, each seeking vainly for some safe corner. Outside a red head was cocked like a question mark, as its owner listened attentively, then deliberately looked up at the sun and winked. Tap! Tap! The wall gave way! A chorus of lamentation arose,—their hour had come! . . . That night, a very much satisfied woodpecker sighed happily as he tucked his head under his wing, to dream of luscious, greedy, wriggling beetles.

Student's Theme

What are the merits of "Loquacious" as a suspense story?

Loquacious

Some people are talkative, but even the most garrulous can be outdone. Some people talk on and on, their voices now rising to high pitches of excitement, now sinking to mysterious whispers; but there is one voice which never changes, neither rises nor falls, no matter how interesting or how tiresome its story may be. The monotony is never broken,—hour after hour it continues. It has been known to stop,—yes! but even after an interlude, it will resume the old tale. Why does it persist? Why does its story not vary? Obstinate it repeats, word for word, second for second, the address which it has been delivering for so long. "Work!" says the voice. "Waste not your time!" it goes on,—still the same persistent command not to idle. It must have memorized that strain at birth and neglected to learn another. It never will learn another now,—it is too late. You may teach a child a new story, or a new song, but not even a new syllable can be taught to a clock!

Student's Theme

In the two following stories how does each writer win the interest of the reader at the beginning? How is suspense

maintained until the end? What elements in each story have human appeal? Explain what is meant by the term "restraint" as applied to each story.

Louis

This title has nothing to do with the kings of France. It merely refers to a black horse. When one mentions a *black* horse his hearers generally picture a fine shiny-black racer, with a gay jockey on his back, standing dancing about impatient to be doing something. Louis was not like this. He was a slovenly, bony creature with a wicked head and blunt ears. Unfortunately his nigh hind leg had been badly twisted from birth, and though Louis could run over fences quickly enough he could not work very well.

His owner had several times considered destroying him but as Louis never did any harm, he refrained.

One morning Louis could scarcely walk. His twisted leg seemed to have gone altogether bad and from the way the sweat poured from his legs, chest and temples he seemed to be in great pain. The man knew that the fatal hour had come.

Slowly and carefully he led Louis to the woods and there on a mossy bank in a swampy place, amid cedars and willows, he tethered him to a sapling. Backing away a few feet he levelled his old shotgun but for the moment his courage failed him when he saw those level reproachful eyes upon him. He, a mere man, was about to destroy something which he could never repair, but he saw ahead of Louis long days and nights of torture which only this most extreme of methods could alleviate. He thought, all in a moment, as his eye glanced along the sights, "Do unto others——."

The sights lined up with the star. The man took a quick breath and became as of stone. A dull roar rolled over the swamp intensified by the heavy vegetation and

sounding like a drum in that damp and shut in place—but Louis didn't hear it!

He had left for home!

Student's Theme

Adrift in a Blizzard

Three big navy tugs, the *Wyossing*, *Aurora* and *Seabright*, hurriedly slipped their moorings just before noon yesterday and went charging out to sea through the storm, full speed ahead.

The wireless at the Brooklyn Navy Yard had picked up a call from the Sandy Hook lightship. Over miles of wind-torn water came the sputter of the electric spark:

"Five barges with men, women, and children aboard passed here driving out to sea. Hurry."

The tugs hurried, for a ninety-mile wind on which a blizzard was riding was pushing five chalk-laden barges with five men, five women, and fifteen children further away from land and hope of rescue each moment.

Late last evening they returned, buffeted and battered by the tremendous seas. Only four of the barges came back with them. The Atlantic had overwhelmed the fifth, but the five men, the five women, and the fifteen children were safe, thanks to the courage and seamanship of Lieutenant Harry Denyse, who commanded the rescuing tugs.

The wind that had been freshening all night became a gale at dawn yesterday. Three Pennsylvania barges, one New York Central, and one Jersey Central, had tugged at their anchors all night long off Stapleton, Staten Island. At six yesterday morning the wind tore them loose and, aided by the waves and tide, began to drive them out to sea.

By the time the barge captains and their families learned what had occurred the swirling snow clouds had cut them off from land. The blast of the wind swept away the feeble voices of their horns and bells.

Down through the Narrows the barges swept as though riding a millrace, and then land dropped away entirely, and they were driving out on to the Atlantic on the shoulders of the worst storm of the year.

There was nothing that they could do except fly pitiful signals of distress that the snow made invisible at a hundred yards. The barges, heavily laden, lurched and wallowed through the great waves and began to take in water. Twenty-four hours at most would be their life in such weather.

And then something that the bargemen and their wives and children swear was not just chance drove one of the five close to the lightship that stands sentinel in all weather at the harbour's gates.

Men of the lightship saw a dark clumsy shape go staggering past, half buried in foam, and caught the words that set the wireless operator hammering frantically on his key.

When they reached the open sea, the powerful tugs had rough weather of it, for the waves were growing larger almost momentarily and the search for the barges in the middle of the blinding snowstorm called for much turning and twisting, quartering the miles of heaving sea like hunting dogs.

At last, to the bellowing of their sirens, there came a thin shout in answer, and four of the barges loomed out of the storm, splintered and leaking, but still riding the waves. To these the *Wyossing* and *Seabright* passed lines and headed back for the harbour, and the *Aurora* went on alone through the darkening world of water and snow on the trail of the missing Jersey Central barge, on which a man, his wife and four children were drifting out into the gathering night.

Dusk was falling and the *Aurora's* crew had almost given up hope, when they finally found the missing barge, twenty miles off the lightship and leaking badly. The tug

passed her a hawser and turned her own bow toward shore. Her engines strained desperately, but with the waterlogged weight at her stern she could make no headway in the face of the storm.

No small boat could have lived in the turmoil of wind and wave. There was only one thing to do—run the *Aurora* as close as possible to the foundering barge and let the barge captain and his family jump for it.

Accordingly, the little group, the captain, his wife and four small children, scrambled to the bow of their sinking craft and stood there while the *Aurora* watched for a quiet moment when she might run in close and give them a chance.

This came at last. For a moment the tug's and the barge's decks hung on a level and the man caught up his wife and threw her into the arms of the bluejackets at the tug's bow. Four times he threw children to safety. Then he jumped.

The *Aurora* turned her head into the storm once more, and the sinking barge dropped behind as the tug came plowing her way home, while in her cabin a man, his wife, and four children cried, and then laughed, then cried again.

F. F. VAN DE WATER

From *New York Herald Tribune*, March 29, 1919

ASSIGNMENT

1. Bring to class what you consider to be a well written newspaper report of an accident.
2. Write a story of about 200 words, in which suspense is the chief motive. If possible, base the story on your own experience. First think out your story from beginning to end; then tell it to a friend. Make an outline in which each important detail is set down in its position relative to the climax. When you have finished your story, give it an original title.

3. Criticize the following as opening sentences:
- (a) Directly in my path moved a small white object.
 - (b) "The sight was fearful," she cried.
 - (c) I had now reached the end of my allowance.
 - (d) It was as I turned into the park that I was sure I was being shadowed.
 - (e) I shall never forget my first sight of the man.
 - (f) The west-bound stopped at San Rosario on time at 8.20 A.M.

XII

HOW TO TRANSMIT IMPRESSIONS AND CREATE EFFECTS

He says that "it is not difficult to write things, but very difficult *not* to write them"; that is to say, to avoid writing empty phrases—an art that very few have mastered.

From *The Diary of Tolstoy's Wife*

WE all have eyes, but we do not all see. The gifted writer is a skilled observer. With keen and understanding eyes he notes the individual characteristics of an object or a person. Through his senses he receives not things, but the impression of things. The form, colour, sound, smell, taste, feel or emotion of a thing is singled out as the source of its predominant effect. Vividly to describe an object, the writer works through the senses of the reader by presenting the thing in its effects. The success of the writer of to-day is measured largely by his capacity to receive impressions that are new, fresh and individual and by his ability to transmit these quickly, definitely and strikingly to the reader's mind. On this subject Joseph Conrad wrote: "My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you see. That—and no more, and it is everything."

Every sensible writer knows that the modern reader has little time to dally with description that is not written with a purpose. To convey an impression the writer must organize his material in such a way as will bring out the salient features. The details of an impression are marshalled as are the cars of a way-freight train, to be set off in orderly succession as the impression proceeds to its climax or destination. A logical sequence of thought is, of course, the pre-requisite of all good writing, but selection and arrangement of material will not alone produce a special effect. That is created by the writer, and it is known by what it does rather than how it is done. It reveals the writer's knowledge of his subject and his emotional response to it. It reflects his way of looking at life and the charm of his personality. What he perceives, he vivifies and embellishes by imagination. What he feels, he deepens and enriches by reflection. Prose which lacks the human appeal of such qualities will not hold the interest of the reader very long. The writer who sets out definitely to create an effect is likely to interest his reader because his composition will possess some kind of purpose, arrangement and style.

EXERCISE I

1. Some writers can flash an image or an idea into the reader's imagination by a single apt word. A single phrase often opens a whole vision. From the following excerpts select the words or phrases which carry the image or the emotion. Write down the details of the picture and try in a few words to describe the sensation which each passage brings to you.

- (a) There was no movement anywhere except when a bird dipped and soared in a hasty flight homewards, or when a beetle went slugging by like a tired bullet.

From *The Demi-Gods* JAMES STEPHENS

- (b) At the meeting-place of earth and sky the giant river rested, motionless in its coat of mail, a moon-sword at its side.

* * *

Sunlight poured over the plain and lay on her door-step, friendly and familiar as a cat.

MARIE LE FRANC
From *The Whisper of a Name*

- (c) Very gently without any sag or jerk, the bridge swung out into the gulf like a silver pendulum, and several little black things were shaken from it.

JOHN BUCHAN
From *The Courts of the Morning*

- (d) But sometimes, after a winter of floods, the water is well stocked, and one catches fish with a bloom on them like a ripe plum.

From *The Spectator*, London

- (e) As I opened the cabin door the darkness seemed to bulge, it was so dark.

Student's Theme

- (f) The young birds had ventured from the nest. Four pairs of eyes appeared among the leaves, eyes which glistened like drops of water in sunlight.

Student's Theme

2. Give three verbs that might be used in sentences to describe

- (a) In flight—a dragon fly, a crow, a butterfly, a bat, a partridge, a canary, a heron, an airplane, a ball, a kite;
- (b) In motion—smoke, a caterpillar, a canoe, a mud turtle, a snail, a goose, a river, a very old man, a skater;
- (c) In action—a piston, a fountain, a circular saw, a shuttle, a pendulum.

3. Give two adverbs, or adverbial phrases or clauses, to describe the predominant feature of each of the following: the fire reels, a typewriter, a printing press, a stubborn pig, a boy diving, a merry-go-round, Niagara Falls.

4. What adjectives would you use to describe the sensations you associate with the following:

a sunflower, a woollen blanket, a velvet cushion, a horsehair sofa, a fog, a ^{wheat} cornfield, a grapefruit, celery, a police siren, snow, mud.

5. (a) What restful words would you use to describe a cosy room; violent words to describe a thunder storm; flaring words to describe a fire; gloomy words to describe a hay loft; wet words to describe a cellar; staccato words to describe an orchestra; dignified words to describe a church; quiet words to describe a library; noisy words to describe a garage; restless words to describe a railway station; fragrant words to describe the kitchen on Saturday morning; colourful words to describe the interior of a fruit store.

(b) Using one of these groups of words, write a paragraph of description to produce a single dominant effect upon the reader.

6. (a) Select a group of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs which apply specially to each one of the following:

a rescue from drowning, a bakery, an hotel, a busy thoroughfare, a herd of cattle, a rolling and wooded

countryside, a field of wheat, a windy sky, a July day.

(b) From a single point of view and for a definitely chosen purpose, write a paragraph on one of the subjects given in (a).

✓ 7. Complete each of the following in two different ways:

(a) The stoker's face shone like . . .

(b) The principal spoke in a clear, resonant voice like . . .

(c) The warm summer breeze reminded me of . . .

(d) The dead leaves looked like . . .

(e) The bathers splashed about like . . .

(f) The rain beat upon the windows like . . .

(g) Crowds of people milled about the square like . . .

(h) His hair bristled up like . . .

(i) The wet sponge felt like . . .

(j) The jelly tasted like . . .

8. Express the sensations awakened by the following as accurately and realistically as you can, in not more than 50 words:

✓ (a) the smell of the earth after rain; the smell of wood smoke; the smell of a root cellar; ✓

(b) the sound of an old car climbing a hill; the sound of a distant train; the sound of cattle crossing a small bridge; the sound of a high wind in mid winter; ✓

(c) the taste of a russet apple; the taste of licorice; the taste of cod liver oil; the taste of a lemon; ✓

(d) the smoothness of a piece of chalk; the roughness of a file; the sharpness of a razor; the clamminess of a fish; ✓

- (e) the gloominess of an old room; the glaze of a headlight.

EXERCISE 2

Read aloud:

Autumn

Autumn is youthful, mirthful, frolicsome—the child of summer's joy—and on every side there are suggestions of juvenility and mischief. While spring is a careful artist who paints each flower with delicate workmanship, autumn flings whole pots of paint about in wildest carelessness.

The violet paint is smeared grotesquely on the riotous foliage; daffodil and crocus dyes are emptied over limes and chestnuts. Our eyes surfeit themselves on the gorgeous feast of colours—purple, mauve, vermilion, saffron, russet, silver and bronze. The leaves are dipped and soaked in fiery hues, yet Shelley gazed at the pantomime-woods and declared, amid all the pomp and pageantry, the year was on her deathbed, and this was her shroud!

Why do the poets feel that autumn is ancient? He romps over the earth, chasing the gales. He revels in boisterous gaiety. He torments the stately trees, tears their foliage off in handfuls, rocks them backwards and forwards till they groan, and then scampers away leaving heavenly peace behind him.

The fallen leaves are set racing down the lane. With madcap destructiveness he wastes his own handiwork, stripping the finery from the woods and forests. Then he sets the bracken afire and pauses to admire the flaming tints.

The whole spirit of autumn is frolicsome and changeful as that of an eager child. The solemn tints are the grotesque hues of the harlequin, and the mournful winds are suggestive of young giants playing leapfrog over the

tree-tops. The lengthening period of darkness is a reminder of the long sleep of a healthy child, and when the sun awakes each autumn morning he rubs his misty eyes and wonders what antics he will see before bed-time.

Spring is a lovely maiden; Summer a radiant bride; but Autumn is a tomboy whose occasional quietness is more alarming than his noisiest escapades.

From *Essays of To-day*

ROGER WRAY

(By permission of the publishers,
George G. Harrap & Company Limited.)

EXERCISE

1. From *Autumn* select the similes, metaphors, contrasts, allusions, suggestive words, and picturesque and colourful phrases.

2. What thoughts do most people associate with autumn? What original thought is expressed in this author's treatment of the subject?

3. What is the central image in this passage? Select words to show that this image is kept before the reader from beginning to end. What is the effect of the whole passage upon the reader?

4. Show by definite reference to the passage the writer's accuracy of observation, power of imagination, and capacity for reflection.

5. How many of your senses are awakened by this passage?

6. There are a number of phrases and clauses in this passage which in rhythm imitate the sounds and movements of the objects they describe. Choose phrases and sentences which are particularly rhythmical and imitative of sound or of image.

7. Show that this writer understands the harmonies that can be made by an interchange of vowel sounds, and the chords that can be created by the clash of consonants.

8. In the first paragraph, read *waste* for *carelessness*. In the second paragraph, read *bright colours* for *fiery hues*. In the

third paragraph, read *runs* for *romps*; *fun* for *gaiety*; *ravages* for *torments*; *strips* for *tears*; *sways* for *rocks*; and *runs off* for *scampers away*. In the fourth paragraph, read *tearing* for *stripping*, *alight* for *afire*, and *burning colours* for *flaming tints*. How many effects are lost by the change made in each case?

9. What words in the last sentence present the same image as that suggested in the first sentence?

10. Can you find any vague words, listless phrases, or smudgy images in the passage?

11. What does this passage reveal in respect to (a) the author's outlook on life; (b) his personality; (c) his prose style?

12. Write an essay of about the same length on one of the following subjects:

(a) Describe a typical winter's day in your province for a boy who has always lived in the tropics.

(b) Describe a spring day in your province for a boy who has always lived in Alaska.

Before you begin to write, gather all the sights, sounds, smells and touch-sensations which you associate with such a day. What are the characteristic features which distinguish this day from a day in any other season? What thoughts and feelings are awakened by these sensations? Organize your sense impressions around an incident, a ramble, a description of a scene, or a reflection upon a scene, until it becomes a harmonious unit, an artistic whole. What literary devices can you use to make your subject clear, pleasing and interesting to the reader? When you have finished writing, read your essay aloud. Are all the principal words suggestive, the important phrases picturesque and melodious, and the sentences smooth and rhythmic? Is the reader likely to have the same sensations

which you feel? Is he likely to imagine the same pictures which you see? Will the piquancy of your expressions delight him?

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between description and narration, narration and exposition, and exposition and description. Some short passages of excellent prose may contain bits of all three forms. Good writing employs them all, but for the purpose of analysis we shall group some prominent types of description. Impressions, scenes, objects, characters, and moods are sometimes dwelt upon to the length of a paragraph. As you study the following examples, it is important to remember that they have been taken out of their settings and cut away from their motives and some of their effects.

A Single Point of View

Models

A

In the village were three cottages, their backs to the forest; their rugged noses seemed to scowl from beneath the pine-trees, and their dim tear-dribbling window-eyes looked wolfish. Their grey timbers lay on them like wrinkles, their reddish-yellow thatch, like bobbed hair, hung to the ground. Behind them was the forest; in front, pasture, thickets, forest again, and sky. The neighbouring crossways coiled round them in a ring, then narrowed away into the forest.

From *Tales of the Wilderness*

BORIS PILNIAK

B

And this is how I see the East. I have seen its secret places and have looked into its very soul; but now I see it always from a small boat, a high outline of mountains, blue and afar in the morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged

wall of purple at sunset. I have the feel of the oar in my hand, the vision of a scorching blue sea in my eyes. And I see a bay, a wide bay, smooth as glass and polished like ice, shimmering in the dark. A red light burns far off upon the gloom of the land, and the night is soft and warm. We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odours of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night—the first sigh of the East on my face. That I can never forget. It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight.

From *Youth*

JOSEPH CONRAD

(By permission of the publishers, Wm. Blackwood & Sons Ltd.)

C

Day returned briefly at sunset. It was an astonishing gift. The clouds rapidly lifted and the sky cleared, till the sea extended far to a bright horizon, hard and polished, a clear separation of our planet and heaven. The waves were still ponderous. The *Windhover* laboured heavily. We rolled over the bright slopes aimlessly. She would rear till the forward deck stuck up in front of us, then drop over, flinging us against the dodger, and the shock would surround her with foam that was an eruption of greenish light.

The sun was a cold rayless ball halved by the dark sea. The wall of heaven above it was flushed and translucent marble. There was a silver paring of moon in a tincture of rose. When the sun had gone, the place it had left was luminous with saffron and mauve, and for a brief while we might have been alone in a vast hall with its crystalline dome penetrated by a glow that was without. The purple waters took the light from above and the waves turned to flames. The fountains that mounted at the bows and fell inboard came as showers of gems. (I heard afterwards it was still foggy in London.) And now, having made all I can of sunset and ocean, and a spray of amethysts, jaciths, emer-

alds, zircons, rubies, peridots and sapphires, it is no longer possible for me to avoid the saloon, the thought of which, for an obscure reason, my mind loathed.

From "Off-Shore" in *London River* H. M. TOMLINSON
(By permission of the author.)

D

Drake looked out across the city. At his feet lay the quiet strip of garden, lawn and bush; beyond, the lamps burning on the parapets of the Embankment, and beyond them, the river shining in the starlight, polished and lucent like a slab of black marble, with broad regular rays upon it of a still deeper blackness, where the massive columns of Hungerford Bridge cast shadows on the water. An engine puffed and snorted into the station, leaving its pennant of white smoke in the air. Through the glass walls of the signal-box above the bridge Drake could see the men in a blaze of light working at the levers, and from the Surrey end there came to him a clink, and at the distance a quite musical clink, of truck against truck as some freight-train was shunted across the rails. Away to his right the light was burning on Westminster clock-tower; on Westminster Bridge the lamps of cabs and carriages darted to and fro like fire-flies. Drake watched two of them start across in the same direction a few yards apart, saw the one behind close up, the one in front spurt forward as though each was straining for the lead. They drew level, then flashed apart, then again drew level, and so passing and repassing raced into the myriad lights upon the opposite bank. That bank was visible to him through a tracery of leafless twigs, for a tree grew in front of his window on the farther edge of the gardens, and he could see the lights upon its roadway dancing, twirling, clashing in the clear night, just as they clashed and twirled and danced in the roadway beneath him, sparks from a forge, and that forge London. In their ceaseless motion they seemed rivulets of fire, and the black

sheet of water between them the solid highway. But even while he looked, a ruby light moved on that highway out from the pillars of the bridge, and then another and another. Everywhere was the glitter of lights; fixed, flashing like a star on the curve, or again growing slowly from a pin's point to an orb, and then dwindling to a point and vanishing. And on every side, too, Drake heard the quick beat of horses, and the rattle of wheels struck out not from silence, but from a dull eternal hum like the hum of a mill, sharp particular notes emerging incessantly from a monotonous volume of sound.

From *The Philanderers*

A. E. W. MASON

(By permission of Macmillan & Co., Ltd., of London, England, and The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, Toronto.)

EXERCISE

1. A writer may describe a scene by beginning with remote objects and working towards those near him, or the reverse. He may let his eye travel from right to left or from left to right. Sometimes he begins in the centre and circles outward. He must not change his position or point of view, however, without informing the reader. What is the point of view in each of the passages given above—from what point and in what order does each writer describe the scene before him?

2. By what devices did the writer of A make his description vivid?

3. The scene in B is described through its effects. What senses did the writer use? Show that there is order, unity and climax in the paragraph.

4. In C, what is the predominant effect and by the use of what details and devices is it produced? Show the natural sequence of all the details.

5. Show that in D there is unity, harmony and coherence of all the parts. What single impression does D make upon the mind?

6. Which passage interests you most and how do you account for its appeal?
7. Which passage interests you least and how would you improve it?

A Changing Point of View

Models

stationary
complete
interest (Moving)

John Arden's stone cottage stood in the midst of the hill plateau, higher than the streams began, shelterless to the four winds. While washing dishes Deborah could see, through the small, age-misted pane, counties and blue ranges lying beneath the transparent or hazy air in the bright, unfading beauty of inviolate nature. She would gaze out between the low window-frame and the lank geraniums, forgetting the half-dried china, when grey rainstorms raced across from far Cader Idris, ignoring in their majestic progress the humble, variegated plains of grass and grain, breaking like a tide on the unyielding heather and the staunch cottage. Beyond the kitchen and attached to the house was the shippen, made of weatherboarding, each plank overlapping the next. This was lichen-grey, like the house, stone and wood having become worn as the hill-folk themselves, browbeaten and mellowed by the tempestuous years, yet tenacious, defying the storm. Sitting in the kitchen on a winter night, the Ardens could hear the contented rattle of the two cow-chains from the shippen, the gentle coughing and stamping of the folded sheep, while old Rover lay with one ear pricked, and now and then a hill pony—strayed from the rest—whickered through the howling ferocity of the gale.

From *The Golden Arrow*

MARY WEBB

(By courtesy of Jonathan Cape Limited, Toronto.)

B

The high volcanic peaks pierced the opal mists which rose from the Atlantic. Seen in early dawn, Ponta Rica looked like a jewel shining through gossamer. As we came nearer, the mists melted away, and the white buildings of the town peeped at us, flashing from their windows golden reflections of the rising sun. A delicious feel in the air harmonized with the natural beauty of the scene. Beneath great barren cliffs skimmed a fleet of fishing boats with lateen sails. Above the cliffs were green terraces of cultivated land rising like steps towards a slant of purple-grey scoria, drifts of pumice and dog-toothed peaks the colour of ash.

From *Rivers to Cross*

ROLAND PERTWEE

(By permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.)

C

The cliff called "Starved Rock," now pointed out to travellers as the chief natural curiosity of the region, rises, steep on three sides as a castle wall, to the height of a hundred and twenty-five feet above the river. In front, it overhangs the water that washes its base; its western brow looks down on the tops of the forest trees below; and on the east lies a wide gorge or ravine, choked with the mingled foliage of oaks, walnuts, and elms; while in its rocky depths a little brook creeps down to mingle with the river. From the rugged trunk of the stunted cedar that leans forward from the brink, you may drop a plummet into the river below, where the cat-fish and the turtles may plainly be seen gliding over the wrinkled sands of the clear and shallow current. The cliff is accessible only from behind, where a man may climb up, not without difficulty, by a steep and narrow passage. The top is about an acre in extent.

FRANCIS PARKMAN

Station

D

To get in, you certainly had to be handy. You slung yourself in through a square, timbered hole, like the frame of a picture, set in the back wall of the trench. The bottom of this wooden hatch was clear above high-water mark, at any rate in good weather. Then down a dozen steps cut in the chalk. There was no need to fall down these stairs the way people did. At the foot of the stairs you did not turn right, nor yet left, as in most of the drains that passed for dug-outs in those parts. You went straight on, into the heart of the land. First came a bit of clean darkness, say thirty feet long. Then a belt, thirty or forty feet thick, of the smoke that had missed the chimney-pipe over our brazier. This barrage had to be crossed. As soon as it thinned you began to get visions of lights round an altar, burning straight up and quiet. Then you were there.

From *Fiery Particles*

C. E. MONTAGUE

(By permission of James B. Pinker & Son.)

EXERCISE

1. In each of these paragraphs, how many different points of view are given and how is the reader prepared for each change?
2. Show that each writer has arranged his details in a regular and natural sequence.
3. In each passage what is the characterizing feature, the definite point of appeal or interest?
4. Which passage leaves the clearest picture in your mind and how do you account for its effect?
5. Show that each writer has a mental grasp of the scene and the power to indicate clearly perspective and atmosphere.

Impressions

Models

A

The morning advanced. The heated air grew easily hotter, as if from some reserve of enormous blaze on which it could draw at will. Bullocks only shifted their stinging feet when they could bear the soil no longer: even the insects were too languorous to pipe, the basking lizards hid themselves and panted. It was so still you could have heard the least buzz a mile off. Not a naked fish would willingly move his tail. The ponies advanced because they must. The children ceased even to muse.

From *A High Wind in Jamaica* RICHARD HUGHES
(By permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.)

B

The universal stare made the eyes ache. Towards the distant blue of Italian coast, indeed, it was a little relieved by light clouds of mist, slowly rising from the evaporation of the sea, but it softened nowhere else. Far away the staring roads deep in dust, stared from the hillside, stared from the hollow, stared from the interminable plain. Far away, the dusty vines overhanging wayside cottages, and the monotonous wayside avenues of parched trees without shade, drooped beneath the stare of earth and sky. So did the horses with drowsy bells in long files of carts, creeping slowly towards the interior; so did their recumbent drivers, when they were awake, which rarely happened; so did the exhausted labourers in the fields. Everything that lived or grew was oppressed by the glare; except the lizard, passing swiftly over rough stone walls, and the cicada, chirping his hot dry chirp, like a rattle. The very dust was scorched brown, and something quivered in the atmosphere as if the air itself were panting.

From *Little Dorrit*

CHARLES DICKENS

C

The summer's night at end, the sun stands up as a crown of hostile flames from that huge covert of inhospitable sandstone bergs; the desert day dawns not little and little, but it is noontide in an hour. The sun, entering as a tyrant, upon the waste landscape, darts upon us a torment of fiery beams, not to be remitted till the far-off evening.—No matins here of birds; not a rock-partridge cock, calling with blithesome chuckle over the extreme waterless desolation. Grave is that giddy heat upon the crown of the head; the ears tingle with a flickering shrillness, a subtle crepitation it seems, in the glassiness of this sun-stricken nature: the hot sand-blink is in the eyes, and there is little refreshment to find in the tents' shelter; the worsted booths leak to this fiery rain of sunny light. Mountains looming like dry bones through the thin air stand far around about us: the savage flank of Ybba Moghrair, the high spire and ruinous stacks of el-Jebal, Chebad, the coast of Helwan! Herds of the weak nomad camels waver dispersedly, seeking pasture in the midst of this hollow fainting country, where but lately the locusts have fretted every green thing.

From *Arabia Deserta*

CHARLES M. DOUGHTY

(By courtesy of Jonathan Cape Limited, Toronto.)

D

The old town, as I was aware from studying the maps, occupied the only flat part of the island, sprawling in great confusion over a square half-mile on the sea level. A more vile place would be hard to imagine. The smell, if possible, was worse than that of a Neapolitan slum. The streets, which were littered with garbage and indescribable filth, were as intricate as a maze. Not one in a dozen was wide enough for the passage of a vehicle. The houses lolled against one another like drunken men. More forlorn houses I have never seen: broken windows, swinging shutters, rifted plaster, and everywhere a tale of dirt,

squalor, and desolation. For the most part they were deserted, although some must still have been tenanted to judge from the army of urchins who pattered along after my cab crying out for ha'pence.

From *Rivers to Cross*

ROLAND PERTWEE

(By permission of the publishers, Houghton Mifflin Company.)

E

When I left the wheel-house to go below, it was near midnight. As I opened the heavy door of the house the night howled aloud at my appearance. The night smelt pungently of salt and seaweed. The hand-rail was cold and wet. The wind was like ice in my nose, and it tasted like iron. Sometimes the next step was at a correct distance below my feet; and then all that was under me would be swept away. I descended into the muffled saloon, which was a little box enclosing light and warmth partially submerged in the waters. There it smelt of hot engine-oil and stale clothes. I got used to the murmuring transit of something which swept our outer walls in immense bounds, and the flying grind of the propeller, and the bang-clang of the rudder when it was struck . . . and must have gone to sleep. . . .

H. M. TOMLINSON

From "Off-Shore" in *London River*

(By permission of the author.)

F

Oh the cracking of whips, the shouts and oaths of the carters, and the grating of wheels upon the enormous stones that formed the pavement! In fact, there was a wild hurly-burly upon the bridge, which nearly deafened me. But if upon the bridge there was a confusion, below it there was a confusion ten times confounded. The tide, which was fast ebbing, obstructed by the immense piers of the old bridge, poured beneath the arches with a fall of several feet, forming in the river below as many whirlpools as there were

arches. Truly tremendous was the roar of the descending waters, and the bellow of the tremendous gulfs, which swallowed them for a time, and then cast them forth, foaming and frothing from their horrid jaws.

From *Lavengro*

GEORGE BORROW

G

When you don't talk you can listen. One of the good points of Old Death (a dug-out) was that the sound of shells would come to you there a deal bigger than life, and yet muted, as if every burst were a marvel, and yet far away, and nothing to us, like a wonderful thing in a book. We could hear it the way a child hears the big waves when he is in bed in a room on the land side of a house by the sea. At each burst the earth round us thudded softly; it did not seem to feel much of a shock—only a muffled, dreamy sort of heaving, 'as if it were not sleeping well. But there was always a kind of pulse, slow or fast, in this rumibly noise, and now it was rising.

From *Fiery Particles*

C. E. MONTAGUE

(By permission of James B. Pinker & Son.)

H

They stood on the curb while the crowd, noisy, cheerful, exaggerated, swirled back and forwards around them. Suddenly eleven o'clock boomed from Big Ben. Before the strokes were completed there was utter silence; as though a sign had flashed from the sky, the waters of the world were frozen into ice. The omnibuses in Trafalgar Square stayed where they were; every man stood, his hat in his hand. The women held their children with a warning clasp. The pigeons around the Arch rose fluttering and crying into the air, the only sound in all the world; the two minutes seemed eternal. . . .

The moment was over; the world went on again, but there were many there who would remember.

From *The Young Enchanted*

HUGH WALPOLE

(By permission of the author.)

I

The woods are glistening as fresh and fair as if they had been new-created overnight. The water sparkles, and tiny waves are dancing and splashing all along the shore. Scarlet berries of the mountain-ash hang around the lake. A pair of kingfishers dart back and forth across the bay, in flashes of living blue. A black eagle swings silently around his circle, far up in the cloudless sky. The air is full of pleasant sounds, but there is no noise. The world is full of joyful life, but there is no crowd and no confusion. There is no factory chimney to darken the day with its smoke, no trolley-car to split the silence with its shriek and smite the indignant ear with the clanging of its impudent bell. No lumberman's axe has robbed the encircling forests of their glory of great trees. No fires have swept over the hills and left behind them the desolation of a bristly landscape. All is fresh and sweet, calm, and clear and bright.

From *Fisherman's Luck*

HENRY VAN DYKE

(By permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.)

J

Next morning the August sun shone, and the wood was all a-hum with insects. The wasps were working at the pine boughs high overhead; the bees by dozens were crowding to the bramble flowers; swarming on them; humblebees went wandering among the ferns in the copse and in the ditches and calling at every purple heath-blossom, at the purple knap-weeds, purple thistles, and broad handfults of yellow-weed flowers. Wasp-like flies barred with yellow suspended themselves in the air between the pine-trunks like hawks hovering, and suddenly shot themselves a yard forward or to one side, as if the rapid vibration of their wings while hovering had accumulated force which drove them as if discharged from a cross-bow. The sun had set all things in motion.

RICHARD JEFFERIES

EXERCISE

1. In each of the models given above, what is the fundamental image or the single impression which the paragraph as a whole makes upon you? Is it beauty of contour or colour, luxury, spaciousness, remoteness, congestion, freshness, coolness, silence, solitude, commotion, contentment, or some other impression? Through what senses is each effect produced?

2. Unity within a paragraph may be achieved by (a) frequent repetition of a suggestive word or its synonyms; (b) arranging details in a natural and logical order; (c) sequence of thought; (d) singleness of mood. Choose a paragraph which illustrates each of these methods of achieving unity. In which paragraph are two or more methods employed?

3. Pick out six different literary devices used in these paragraphs to create effects.

4. Write a paragraph on each of any three of the subjects given below. Before you begin, select a fundamental image (the particular impression you wish to make), a point of view, a few of the most effective details, and a group of suggestive words and phrases. Imagination and reflection will appeal to your reader.

My first flight in an airplane; A morning plunge in a northern lake; Being examined for a driver's license; In a small boat during a storm; Standing on the edge of a high precipice; Walking along a country road on a hot July day; Night in a forest or on a lake; Maple sugar sickness; Two pounds of chocolates and afterwards; Up a tree in a high wind; My first black bass; Sounds in a city at midnight; An adventure in new shoes; Variety in a circus; Catching influenza; Night in camp; Spring as seen from my window; Drenched to the skin; An apple orchard in blossom time; A rock garden in summer; An automobile show window.

Scenes and Objects Fixed or Moving

Models

A

Earthquake

Then it came. The water of the bay began to ebb away, as if some one had pulled up the plug: a foot or so of coral gleamed for a moment new to the air: then back the sea rushed in miniature rollers which splashed right up to the feet of the palms. Mouthfuls of turf were torn away: and on the far side of the bay a small piece of cliff tumbled into the water: sand and twigs showered down, dew fell from the trees like diamonds: birds and beasts, their tongues at last loosed, screamed and bellowed: the ponies, though quite unalarmed, lifted up their heads and yelled.

From *A High Wind in Jamaica*

RICHARD HUGHES

(By permission of the publishers, Harper & Brothers.)

B

A strange kind of bridge it was; huge and massive, and seemingly of great antiquity. It had an arched back like that of a hog, a high balustrade, and at either side, at intervals, were stone bowers bulking over the river, but open on the other side, and furnished with a semi-circular bench. Though the bridge was wide—very wide—it was all too narrow for the concourse upon it. Thousands of human beings were pouring over the bridge. But what chiefly struck my attention was a double row of carts and wagons, the generality drawn by horses as large as elephants, each row striving hard in a different direction, and not unfrequently brought to a standstill.

From *Lavengro*

GEORGE BORROW

C

How beautiful this birch wood! Springs unite to form a tiny lake in the heart of it, and the quiet ripples die on grassy shores. Beneath the branches all about, insects make

the music God composes. Two lofty pines, lost amid the birches, murmur in the breeze which sets every delicate needle trembling. The lake catches to its bosom the sky's blue, the leaves' new green, the white boles; and the wavy mirror blends them in happy dance. Now and then a splash out yonder tells of a fish on the move. Fish, be it known, as long as that . . . !

From *Chez Nous*

ADJUTOR RIVARD

(By permission of the publishers,
McClelland & Stewart Limited.)

D

Look above the web. What a forest of ropes. It might be the rigging of a ship disabled by a storm. They run from every twig of the supporting shrubs, they are fastened to the tip of every branch. There are long ropes, and short ropes, upright and slanting, straight and bent, taut and slack all criss-cross and a-tangle, to the height of three feet or so in inextricable disorder. The whole form a chaos of netting, a labyrinth which none can pass through unless he be endowed with wings of exceptional power.

From *The Life of the Spider*

J. H. FABRE

(By permission of Hodder and Stoughton and
Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.)

E

The Clipper

When I saw her first there was a smoke of mist about her as high as her foreyard. Her topsails and flying kites had a faint glow upon them where the dawn caught them. Then the mist rolled away from her, so that we could see her hull and the glimmer of the red sidelight as it was hoisted inboard. She was rolling slightly, tracing an arc against the heaven, and as I watched her the glow upon her deepened, till every sail she wore burned rosily like an opal turned to the sun, like a fiery jewel. She was radiant, she was of an immortal beauty, that swaying, delicate clipper.

Coming as she came, out of the mist into the dawn, she was like a spirit, like an intellectual presence. Her hull glowed, her rails glowed; there was colour upon the boats and tackling. She was a lofty ship (with skysails and royal staysails), and it was wonderful to watch her, blushing in the sun, swaying and curveting. She was alive with a more than mortal life. One thought that she would speak in some strange language or break out into a music which would express the sea and that great flower in the sky. She came trembling down to us, rising up high and plunging; showing the red lead below her water-line; then diving down till the smother bubbled over her hawseholes. She bowed and curveted; the light caught the skylights on the poop; she gleamed and sparkled; she shook the sea from her as she rose. There was no man aboard of us but was filled with the beauty of that ship.

JOHN MASEFIELD

From *A Tarpaulin Muster: A Memory*

(By permission of the publishers, The Richards Press Ltd.)

EXERCISE

1. Show that each paragraph has a single perspective or point of view.
2. In each paragraph find the central image or impression and state what details, sensations and devices contribute to this effect.
3. Which passage is the most imaginative? Which contains the most reflection? Which is the most exact in presentation of detail? Which is the most affecting?
4. Read again question 4 under "Impressions" Page 188, and then write a paragraph on each of any four of the following topics to bring out, without actual naming, the accompanying effects. Awaken the reader's senses.

A meadow—restfulness and plenty; A ball game—gaiety and excitement; Mountain scenery—grandeur, sublimity and awe; A winter scene—dullness and barrenness; A homestead at sunset—warmth, comfort and peace;

A city slum—ugliness and repulsiveness; A motor car—luxury and extravagance; A steamer coming into a harbour—undeviating and majestic; A canoe crossing your line of vision—ease, grace and poise; An airplane ascending and vanishing—speed and efficiency; A flower garden—form and variety; The heart of a blizzard—confusion and fury; A harvest scene—plenty and thanksgiving; Main Street on Christmas Eve—expectancy and goodwill; A brook in the forest—coolness and solitude; Niagara Falls—majesty and might.

Buildings — Exteriors

Models

A

Scaw House

He turned the corner and saw Scaw House standing amongst its dark trees, with its black palings in front of its garden and the deserted barren patch of field in front of that again. The sun was getting low and the sky above the house was flaming but the trees were sombre and the house was cold.

It did not seem to him to have changed in any way since he had left it. The windows had always been of a grim hideous glass, the stone shape of the place always squat and ugly, and the short flight of steps that led up to the heavy beetling door had always hinted, with their old hard surface, at a surly welcome and a reluctant courtesy. It was all as it had been.

The sky, now a burning red, looked down upon an utterly deserted garden, and the silence that was over all the place seemed to rise, like streaming mist, from the heart of the nettles that grew thick along the crumbling wall.

The paint had faded from the door and the knocker

was rusty; as Peter hammered his arrival on to the flat silence a bird flew from the black bunch of trees, whirled into the air and was gone. . . .

From *Fortitude*

HUGH WALPOLE

(By permission of the author.)

B

At length we stopped before a very old house bulging out over the road; a house with long low lattice-windows bulging out still farther, and beams with carved heads on the ends bulging out too, so that I fancied the whole house was leaning forward, trying to see what was passing on the narrow pavement below. It was quite spotless in its cleanliness. The old-fashioned brass knocker on the low arched door, ornamented with carved garlands of fruit and flowers, twinkled like a star; the two stone steps descending to the door were as white as if they had been covered with fair linen; and all the angles and corners, and carvings and mouldings, and quaint little panes of glass, and quainter little windows, though as old as the hills, were as pure as any snow that ever fell upon the hills. CHARLES DICKENS

EXERCISE

1. How many impressions does each paragraph make upon the mind?
2. By what details and devices are these sensations produced?
3. Select from both paragraphs examples of imaginative and reflective writing.
4. Write paragraphs on one of the following, choosing your own point of view and central image, and using details and devices appropriate to your subject:

The town hall; A country club-house; A church; A log cabin; A summer cottage; A high school; A railway station; A typical farm-house; An old fort; A palatial residence.

Buildings — Interiors

Models

A

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, of the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

EDGAR ALLEN POE

From *The Fall of the House of Usher*

B

The Engine Room of an Ocean Liner

As one looked around, he felt instantly that here was efficiency—quiet, purposeful efficiency—efficiency that would survive even an unexpected and disastrous calamity. The softly purring turbines seemed to hum efficiency. They droned on, neither rising nor falling in pitch, always constant. The huge dynamos suggested power inexhaustible, force unthought of. But the greatest display of efficiency was shown by the men. Efficiency was revealed in their faces, reflected in their bearing, and, one would think, written on their brains.

In a blaze of electric light the men walked among the machines and, as their adjusting and appraising hands touched almost tenderly the levers, valves and drums, one

could readily believe that they were the worshippers of the great god Efficiency, the god of the twentieth century, and that this was his temple.

Student's Theme

C

I turned up the dull and stinking oil lamp, and tried to read; but that fuliginous glim haunted the pages. That black-edged light too much resembled my own thoughts made manifest. There were some bunches of my cabin mate's clothes hanging from hooks, and I watched their erratic behaviour instead. The water in the carafe was also interesting, because quite mad, standing diagonally in the bottle, and then reversing. A lump of soap made a flying leap from the washstand, and then slithered about the floor like something hunted and panic-stricken. I listened to numerous little voices. There was no telling their origins. There was a chorus in the cabin, whispers, complaints, creaks, wails, and grunts; but they were foundered in the din when the spittoon, which was an empty meat tin, got its lashings loose, and began a rioting fandango on the concrete. Over the clothes chest, which was also our table and a cabin fixture, was a portrait of the mate's sweetheart, and on its frame was one of my busy little friends the cockroaches; for the mate and I do not sleep alone in this cabin, not by hundreds. The cockroach stood in thought, waving his hands interrogatively, as one who talks to himself nervously. The ship at that moment received a seventh wave, lurched, and trembled. The cockroach fell. I rose, listening. I felt sure a new clamour would begin at once, showing we had reached another and critical stage of the fight. But no; the brave heart of her was beating as before. I could feel its steady pulse throbbing in our table. We were alive and strong, though labouring direfully.

From *The Sea and the Jungle*

H. M. TOMLINSON

(By permission of the publishers, Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd.)

EXERCISE

1. What impressions are presented in these paragraphs?
2. To what does each paragraph owe its unity?
3. What do you learn from each about the nature of the writer?
4. With the aid of the most appropriate devices, write paragraphs on the following subjects to bring out the accompanying effects. Do not employ the words used here to suggest these effects. Before you begin to write collect some of the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs which apply specially to your subject.

A room in a foundry—weakness of man and might of machines; A class room—interest and alertness; Interior of a railway coach—speed and expectancy; Interior of a church—peace and reverence; Interior of a store—business and pleasure; A court room—tension and fear; Interior of a street car—weariness and discomfort; A living room—comfort and beauty; A business office—industry and efficiency; A garret on a rainy day—mustiness; The basement of a grocery store—smell of tropical fruit.

Persons and Animals

If you make a catalogue of a person's features, your description will read like a passport. Select rather those distinctive features which distinguish one person from the rest of mankind, and group them in such a way as to place your individual quickly and vividly before the reader. A person is known by what he says or chooses not to say, by what he does or refrains from doing, by his likes and dislikes, by his ability or its lack, by the effect he has upon others or their reaction to him. A man's outlook on life is as prominent a part of him as

his nose. Where he is seen and with whom, are conditions which may suggest something of his character. What is the distinguishing feature in each of the following snapshots? What impression do you form of each person or animal? Which are the most significant words in each selection? What figures of speech are used?

Snapshots

The pistol was still clasped in his hand, and his glazing eyes, half obscured by fallen lids, seemed to be finding the range of eternity.

From *Rivers to Cross*

ROLAND PERTWEE

(By permission of the publishers, Houghton, Mifflin Company.)

Surprise riveted Eve to the threshold.

* * *

It seemed to her that memory had become a bright garden in which a procession of communicants marched, singing.

* * *

He was clad in a fisherman's jacket, with sleeves too short, and canvas trousers reaching not quite to his ankles. A handkerchief hung from his pocket. His cheeks were sunken; his level eyes gazed with deep simplicity from a face sculptured by the wind. His head was uncovered, with its greying hair tossed back.

From *The Whisper of a Name*

MARIE LE FRANC

The Bishop had come with his wife—a mild faint penumbra he carried about with him.

From *Right Off the Map*

C. E. MONTAGUE

The Colonel, tall, white-haired, hook-nosed, his back straight at seventy-five, could be taken as the type of pure breeding, but that his wife carried type into the region

where it becomes symbol. Slender and invincible, graceful and gracious, ivory pale above black silk and old lace, she gave it a romantic perfection.

* * *

It angered the Colonel's granddaughter, but also it gave her a crisped feeling that was sharp and pleasant.

From *The Old Road*

MARY CROSBIE

"A slight figure," said Mr. Peggotty, looking at the fire, "kiender worn; soft, sorrowful, blue eyes; a delicate face; a pritty head, leaning a little down; a quiet voice and way—timid a'most. That's Em'ly!"

From *David Copperfield*

CHARLES DICKENS

The animal he bestrode was a broken-down plough-horse, that had outlived almost everything but his viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burrs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral; but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it.

WASHINGTON IRVING

From *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*

A bullet-headed man with a lean, lipless mouth and a twinkling eye, made a good speech against the war. His name was Thomas Cromwell, a commoner.

From *Henry VIII*

FRANCIS HACKETT

His consciousness was like the light scurry of waves at full tide, when the deeper waters are pausing and gathering and turning home.

RUPERT BROOKE

A scent of rotten apples met him as the door opened, a scent so strong that it was confused at once with his vision of the woman who stood there, she, with her gnarled and puckered face, her brown skin and crooked nose standing, as it were, for an actual and visible personification of all the rotten apples that had ever been in the world.

From *Fortitude*

HUGH WALPOLE

(By permission of the author.)

Pen Portraits

A pen portrait is often an introduction to a character sketch. It gives a general impression of the appearance of a person or animal, but it suggests few, if any, traits of character. Like all good expository writing, it is direct and objective. Its merit as description lies in its accuracy of detail and choice of words. A few carefully chosen words well-placed will often bring an individual vividly before the reader. The pen portrait must not read like a passport but it should emphasize distinguishing features.

A

I never saw a more unforgettable face,—pale, serious, *lonely*, delicate, sweet, without being at all what we call fine. She looked sixty, and had on a mutch, white as snow, with its black ribbon; her silvery, smooth hair setting off her dark-grey eyes,—eyes such as one sees only twice or thrice in a lifetime, full of suffering, full also of the overcoming of it: her eyebrows black and delicate, and her mouth firm, patient, and contented, which few mouths ever are.

From *Rab and His Friends*

JOHN BROWN

B

I found Uriah (Heep) reading a great fat book, with such demonstrative attention, that his lank forefinger followed up every line as he read, and made clammy tracks along the page (or so I fully believed) like a snail. . . . It was no fancy of mine about his hands, I observed; for he frequently ground the palms against each other as if to squeeze them dry and warm, besides often wiping them, in a stealthy way, on his pocket-handkerchief. . . . After shaking hands with me—his hand felt like a fish in the dark—he opened the door into the street a very little, and

crept out, and shut it, leaving me to grope my way back into the house, which cost me some trouble and a fall over his stool.

From *David Copperfield*

CHARLES DICKENS

C

A big, lean man he was, his thick shoulders and large, hairy muscular hands suggesting great physical strength, his swarthy face, heavy features, coarse black hair, keen dark eyes, deepset under shaggy brows, suggesting force of character with a possibility of brutality in passion. Yet when he smiled his heavy face was not unkindly, indeed the smile gave it a kind of rugged attractiveness. He was past his first youth, and on his face were the marks of the stormy way by which he had come.

RALPH CONNOR

From *The Sky Pilot in No-Man's Land*

(By permission of the publishers,
McClelland & Stewart, Limited.)

D

His big frame seemed to have dropped flesh and there was a stoop in the square shoulders. His face had lost its rosiness and was red in patches, like that of a man who gets too little fresh air. His hair was much greyer and very thin about the temples and there were lines of overwork between the eyes. But the eyes were the same as before, keen and kindly and shrewd, and there was no change in the firm set of the jaw.

From *Greenmantle*

JOHN BUCHAN

E

Dr. Lartius was a slim young man of the middle height, who held himself straighter than the usual run of sedentary folk. His face was very pale and his mop of hair and fluffy beard were black as jet. He wore large tortoise shell spectacles, and, when he removed them, revealed slightly protuberant and very bright hazel eyes, which contrasted

oddly with his pallor. Had such a figure appeared on the stage, the gallery experts, familiar with stage villains would have unhesitatingly set him down as the anarchist from Moscow about to assassinate the oppressive nobleman and thereby give the hero his chance. But his clothes were far too good for that part. He wore a shiny top-hat and an expensive fur coat, and his neat morning coat, fine linen, unobtrusive black tie and pearl pin suggested the high finance rather than the backstairs of revolution.

From *The Runagates Club*

JOHN BUCHAN

(By permission of the author and the publishers,

Hodder & Stoughton, Limited, Toronto.)

F

The cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to this person. He was tall but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame hung most loosely together. His head was small and flat at the top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck, to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine, descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a cornfield.

WASHINGTON IRVING

From *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*

EXERCISE

1. Study the foregoing pen portraits under these headings:
 - (a) In each select the fundamental image, and the distinguishing features.
 - (b) Find the most descriptive and suggestive words.
 - (c) If any portrait reveals traits of character, state how they are brought out, by speech, expression, dress, gesture, tastes, ability or outlook.

(d) Which is the most vivid pen portrait?

2. Examine the following vague descriptions and account for their ineffectiveness in as many ways as you can.

A

When the boy finally left his mountain home for a school in the distant city, he had grown to be a man to fill the heart of every lover of his race with pride. With his father's powerful frame and close-knit muscles, and the healthy life of the woods and hills leaping in his veins, his splendid body and physical strength were refined and dominated by the mind and spirit of his mother. His shaggy, red-brown hair was like his father's but his eyes were his mother's eyes, with that same trick of expression, that wide questioning gaze, that seemed to demand every vital truth in whatever came under his consideration. He had, too, his mother's quick way of grasping your thoughts almost before you yourself were fully conscious of them, with that same saving sense of humour that made Sammy Lane the life and sunshine of the countryside.

HAROLD BELL WRIGHT

From *The Calling of Dan Matthews*

(By permission of the author and the publishers,
D. Appleton & Company.)

B

The boy moved restlessly from one foot to the other, keeping his eyes down, and for the most part only half singing. A tall and as yet slight figure, surmounted by an interesting head and face—white skin, dark hair—he seemed more keenly observant and decidedly more sensitive than most of the others—appeared indeed to resent and even to suffer from the position in which he found himself. Plainly pagan rather than religious, life interested him, although as yet he was not fully aware of this. All that could be truly said of him now was that there was no definite appeal in all

this for him. He was too young, his mind much too responsive to phases of beauty and pleasure which had little, if anything, to do with the remote and cloudy romance which swayed the minds of his mother and father.

From *An American Tragedy* THEODORE DREISER

(Published by Liveright, Inc., Copyright, 1925.

By permission of the author.)

EXERCISE

Write a pen portrait on one of the following:

Suggest your chum; an immigrant; a pedlar; the homeliest man you have seen; a hired man; a guide; a janitor; a nurse; a motor mechanic; your family doctor; the store-keeper's wife; a character about town; the most interesting animal at the zoo; the neighbour's dog; a "rubber stamp" person; a corrupt politician; the boy next door; an important public character; yourself as someone else sees you.

Character Sketches

Models

A

Somewhere down in the vague depths of his inner consciousness he felt he would like to have rubbed his feet together, for they were rather cold, but they were enveloped in thick boots, and wrapped round with rags and the lower part of his trousers, so he let them be. His legs were embedded in the deep snow, side by side like the hind feet of an elephant. He was wearing an iron-grey cloak, with absurd red squares on the collar under his chin, and a strip of blue cloth with a number on each shoulder. And tucked closely under his arm, while he stood thinking of peas and dripping, was a long heavy cudgel-like object of wood, affixed to an odd-looking iron contrivance, the whole being called a rifle; with this he was able to produce cunningly directed explosions, and by their means to kill or maim other

men far away from him. This man, in whose mouth was a small pipe adapted for smoking dried leaves—a German working man—was not standing under this tree in the burnt forest for his pleasure.—His thoughts were continuously driving westward, where in two or three cubical rooms in a walled house his wife and child awaited him.

From *The Case of Sergeant Grischa* ARNOLD ZWEIG

(By permission of the publishers, Martin Secker Ltd.)

B

The immense accretion of flesh which had descended on her in middle life like a flood of lava on a doomed city had changed her from a plump active little woman with a neatly-turned foot and ankle into something as vast and august as a natural phenomenon. She had accepted this submergence as philosophically as all her other trials, and now, in extreme old age, was rewarded by presenting to her mirror an almost unwrinkled expanse of firm pink and white flesh, in the centre of which the traces of a small face survived as if awaiting excavation. A flight of smooth double chins led down to the dizzy depths of a still-snowy bosom veiled in snowy muslins that were held in place by a miniature portrait of the late Mr. Mingott; and around and below, wave after wave of black silk surged away over the edges of a capacious armchair, with two tiny white hands poised like gulls on the surface of the billows.

From *The Age of Innocence* EDITH WHARTON

(By permission of the author and the publishers,

D. Appleton & Company.)

C

The hour of eight found me knocking at the Count's door. The grim serving-man admitted me to the pleasant chamber which should have been mine own. A dozen wax candles burned in sconces, and on the table among fruits and the remains of supper stood a handsome candelabra of silver. A small fire of logs had been lit on the

hearth, and before it in an armchair sat a strange figure of a man. He seemed not so much old as aged. I should have put him at sixty, but the marks he bore were clearly less those of Time than of Life. There sprawled before me the relics of noble looks. The fleshy nose, the pendulous cheek, the drooping mouth had once been cast in the lines of manly beauty. Heavy eyebrows above and heavy bags beneath spoiled the effect of a choleric blue eye, which age had not dimmed. The man was gross and yet haggard; it was not the padding of good living which clothed his bones but a heaviness as of some dropsical malady. I could picture him in health a gaunt loose-limbed being, high-featured and swift and eager. He was dressed wholly in black velvet, with fresh ruffles and wrist bands, and he wore heeled shoes with antique silver buckles. It was a figure of an older age which rose slowly to greet me, in one hand a snuff box and a purple handkerchief, and in the other a book with finger marking place. He made me a great bow as Madam uttered my name, and held out a hand with a kindly smile.

From *The Moon Endureth*

JOHN BUCHAN

(By permission of the publishers, Wm. Blackwood & Sons Ltd.)

D

At the very last moment, however, when the whistle sounded, the door was flung open to admit some raw November night and a large man. Inigo looked at the man in despair. The man looked at Inigo with cheerful interest. He sat in the middle of the opposite seat, removed his hat, mopped his brow, re-lit the stump of a cigar, put a fat hairy hand on each knee, and blew little benevolent clouds of smoke at Inigo and the sleeping Susie. He was a well-developed specimen of a type of large man seen at all race meetings, boxing matches, football matches, in all sporting clubs and music-hall bars. His head was pear-shaped, beginning with an immense spread of jaw and

ending at a narrow and retreating forehead, decorated by two little loops of hair, parted in the middle. His eyes protruded; his nose shone; his little moustache was ferociously waxed. There was a suggestion that innumerable double whiskies were hard at work illuminating his vast interior. All these details Inigo noted with distaste.

From *The Good Companions*

J. B. PRIESTLEY

(By permission of the author.)

E

Describe the average Western man and you describe the American; from east to west, from north to south, everywhere and always the same—masterful, aggressive, unscrupulous, egotistic, at once good-natured and brutal, kind if you do not cross him, ruthless if you do, greedy, ambitious, self-reliant, active for the sake of activity, intelligent and unintellectual, quick-witted and crass, contemptuous of ideas but amorous of devices, valuing nothing but success, recognizing nothing but the actual, Man in the concrete, undisturbed by spiritual life, the master of methods and slave of things, and therefore the conqueror of the world, the unquestioning, the undoubting, the child with the muscles of a man, the European stripped bare, and shown for what he is, a predatory, unreflecting, naïf, precociously accomplished brute.

From *Appearances*

G. LOWES DICKINSON

(By permission of the publishers, George Allen & Unwin Ltd.)

F

A funny old lady, named Miss Henhouse, who lived near Cow Farm, in a little cottage all by herself, called sometimes upon the Coles and told them stories about the people and the place, which made them "sit up in their chairs". She was an old lady with sharp eyes, a black moustache and a double chin, wore an old shabby bonnet, grey mittens and large shoes which banged after her as she walked. She leant on a cane with a silver knob to it, and

she wore a huge cameo brooch on her breast with a miniature of herself inside it. She was what is called in novels "a character". There was no one who knew so much about Rafiel and its neighbourhood; she had lived here for ever, her father had been a friend of Wellington's and had known members of the local Press Gang intimately. It was from her that Jeremy heard, in detail, the famous story of the Scarlet Admiral. It was, of course, in any case, a well-known story, and Jeremy had often heard it before, but Miss Henhouse made it a new, a most vivid and realistic thing. She sat forward in her chair, leaning on her silver-headed cane, her eyes staring in front of her, her two chins bobbing, gazing, gazing as though it all had happened before her very nose.

From *Jeremy*

HUGH WALPOLE

(By permission of the author.)

G

Next door, in a small room to which day and night were the same, Mr. Pascoe was always to be found bending over his hobbling foot under a tiny yellow fan of gas-light which could be heard making a tenuous shrilling whenever the bootmaker looked up, and ceased riveting. When his head was bent over his task only the crown of a red and matured cricketing cap, which nodded in time to his hammer, was presented to you. When he paused to speak, and glanced up, he showed a face that the gas-jet, with the aid of many secluded years, had tintured with its own artificial hue, a face puckered through a long frowning intent on old boots. He wore an apron that had ragged gaps in it. He was a frail and dingy little man, and might never have had a mother, but could have been born of that dusty workroom, to which he had been a faithful son all his life. It was a murky interior shut in from the day, a litter of petty tools and nameless rubbish on a ruinous bench, a disorder of dilapidated boots, that mean gas-jet, a smell of leather; and

here old Pascoe's hammer defiantly and rapidly attacked its circumstances, driving home at times, and all unseen, more than those rivets. If he rose to rake over his bench for material or a tool, he went spryly, aided by a stick, but at every step his body heeled over because one leg was shorter than the other. Having found what he wanted he would wheel round, with a strange agility that was apparently a consequence of his deformity, continuing his discourse, and driving his points into the air with his hammer, and so hobble back, still talking; still talking through his funny cap, as his neighbours used to say of him. At times he convoluted aerial designs and free ideas with his hammer, spending it aloft on matters superior to boots. The boots were never noticed. Pascoe could revivify his dust. The glitter of his spectacles when he looked up might have been the sparkling of an ardent vitality suppressed in his little body.

H. M. TOMLINSON

From "The Heart's Desire" in *London River*

(By permission of the author.)

H

Though he shuffled to the altar obliged as a rule to help himself with a long stave on account of his leg, he presented himself before Bishop Gardiner not as an inert or sagging mass but as a pyramid of defensiveness. There was in the eyes that living twinkle, half-humorous and half-malicious which may be as kind as dew or as cruel as broken glass. With ears laid back, fists doubled, feet widely splayed, the shoulders built out with velvet and the stomach at anchor, this was a ponderable man, square and imperturbable—until one viewed the face which gave his firmness the impressive mobility that a swiveling gun confers on a bastion. Through long years he had learned to plant himself in his own sort of genial island independence, and, with one eye wide open and the left narrowed, he looked at once crafty and debonair. But this free and good disposition which diffused itself from the unembarrassed Henry was not

unlike the insouciance of his feathered bonnet: he could whip it off in an instant, and there, hard and bold, was the high skull, the convergence of all his smooth and receding policies on that one point, the apex of a pyramidal egoism. It was a strange climax for a nation's policy based on great lines of loyalty and obedience.

From *Henry VIII*

FRANCIS HACKETT

(By permission of Jonathan Cape Limited, Toronto.)

I

There are no such dogs now. He belonged to a lost tribe. As I have said, he was brindled and gray like Rubislaw granite; his hair short, hard, and close, like a lion's; his body thickset, like a little bull,—a sort of compressed Hercules of a dog. He must have been ninety pounds' weight, at the least; he had a large blunt head; his muzzle black as night, his mouth blacker than any night, a tooth or two—being all he had—gleaming out of his jaws of darkness. His head was scarred with the records of old wounds, a sort of series of fields of battle all over it; one eye out, one ear cropped as close as was Archbishop Leighton's father's; the remaining eye had the power of two; and above it, and in constant communication with it, was a tattered rag of an ear, which was forever unfurling itself, like an old flag; and then that bud of a tail, about one inch long, if it could in any sense be said to be long, being as broad as long,—the mobility, the instantaneousness of that bud were very funny and surprising, and its expressive twinklings and winkings, the intercommunications between the eye, the ear, and it, were of the oddest and swiftest.

Rab had the dignity and simplicity of great size; and having fought his way all along the road to absolute supremacy, he was as mighty in his own line as Julius Caesar or the Duke of Wellington, and had the gravity of all great fighters.

From *Rab and His Friends*

JOHN BROWN

EXERCISE

1. In each of the models given above, what is the central image about which are grouped the dominant characteristics or individual peculiarities of the person?
2. In what order are the descriptive details given in each paragraph?
3. Select the passages in which the environment, dress, manners, habits, emotions and outlook of the character play a part in describing the individual.
4. What characteristics are shown by means of the descriptive expressions?
5. What pictures are suggested by means of the characterization?
6. Show that the character in each sketch is seen by the eye of the mind, the writer's imagination. Extract from each sketch the imaginative and reflective elements and make a list of the remaining details. What is the relation between this list and the original sketch?
7. Which do you consider the fullest and most life-like character sketch and give reasons for your choice?
8. Mention a set of circumstances that might induce you to refer to someone as: (*a*) mercenary, (*b*) conceited, (*c*) bold, (*d*) superficial, (*e*) diffident, (*f*) exuberant, (*g*) vivacious, (*h*) elusive.
9. Write a character sketch of an individual in which the chief impression is one of the following: homesickness, grief, generosity, greed, selfishness, shyness, mischievousness, buoyant cheerfulness, pride, anxiety, snobbishness, self-satisfaction, or honesty.
10. Write a character sketch of one of the following:
 - (*a*) A person whose chief traits are gentleness, evenness of temper, and unwavering loyalty to right.

- (b) a boy of fifteen who is lively, mischievous, whole-hearted.
- (c) A dog that is playful, game, companionable, loyal.
- (d) A man whose chief characteristics are ambition, aggressiveness, deceit, and cunning.
- (e) A woman who is benevolent and meditative, but a gossip.
- (f) A girl who is quick tempered, sharp tongued and haughty.
- (g) A boy who is stingy and mean.
- (h) A patronizing woman who likes to force herself and her opinions upon others.
- (i) A girl who is quiet, capable and efficient.

11. Contrast two people of distinctly opposite characteristics; one steady, reliable, practical and efficient; the other, dreamy, temperamental and idealistic.

Moods and Mental States

Models

A

"Keep an eye on Clausel!" I whispered to Laclas; and with that, got down on my elbows and knees, took the rope in both hands, and worked myself, feet foremost, through the tunnel. When the earth failed under my feet, I thought my heart would have stopped; and a moment after I was demeaning myself in mid-air like a drunken jumping-jack. I have never been a model of piety, but at this juncture prayers and a cold sweat burst from me simultaneously.

From *St. Ives*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

B

I do not know if I was what you call afraid; but my heart beat like a bird's, both quick and little; and there was a dimness came before my eyes which I continually rubbed

away, and which continually returned. As for hope, I had none; but only a darkness of despair and a sort of anger against all the world that made me long to sell my life as dear as I was able. I tried to pray, I remember, but that same hurry of my mind, like a man running, would not suffer me to think upon the words; and my chief wish was to have the thing begin and be done with it.

From *Kidnapped*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

(By permission of the publishers, Cassell & Co., Limited.)

C

It had lately occurred to her that her mind was a good deal of a vagabond, and she had spent much ingenuity in training it to a military step, and teaching it to advance, to halt, to retreat, to perform even more complicated manoeuvres, at the word of command. Just now she had given it marching orders, and it had been trudging over the sandy plains of a history of German Thought.

HENRY JAMES

D

The Countess stood in the midst of her apartment like a juvenile Pythoness, under the influence of the prophetic fury. The veins in her beautiful forehead started into swollen blue lines through the hurried impulse of her articulation—her cheek and neck glowed like scarlet—her eyes were like those of an imprisoned eagle, flashing red lightning on the foes whom it cannot reach with its talons. Were it possible for one of the Graces to have been animated by a Fury, the countenance could not have united such beauty with so much hatred, scorn, defiance, and resentment. The gesture and attitude corresponded with the voice and looks, and altogether presented a spectacle which was at once beautiful and fearful; so much of the sublime had the energy of passion united with the Countess Amy's natural loveliness.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

E

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was—but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment, with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain—upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows—upon a few rank sedges—and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium—the bitter lapse into everyday life—the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart—an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it—I paused to think—what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion, that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus arresting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impression; and acting upon this idea, I reined

my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled lustre by the dwelling, and gazed down—but with a shudder even more thrilling than before—upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree-stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

EDGAR ALLEN POE

From *The Fall of the House of Usher*

F

It was a fantastic journey. The road crossed the valleys of the Dove and the Derwent and wound about the lower spurs of the Peak. They ran along green troughs powdered with dust; they sailed up towards great castles of vapour, rosy Himalayas of cloud; they sank through hollows of blue air cupped round with grass; and all the hills, the dales and dingles, the farmhouses came curving to meet them, steadily shone or gloomed for a moment, then slipped noiselessly away like places in a dream. So it seemed to one part of Miss Trant, which saw nothing, knew nothing, but this pageantry, went mazed with wonder, flashing a wing, through the golden afternoon. But she was triune; and the other two of her were very differently occupied. One was busy with the mechanism of the car, and a little dubious of the matter of gears. The other—it was a fair division—had to attend to fellow humanity, which was present in the form of Mrs. Tipstead. At first, Mrs. Tipstead was very stiff, very quiet. Miss Trant did not know what to do with her. It is not easy to make conversation with a strange woman, a woman, moreover, with a social background very different from your own, when you are helping her to overtake a runaway husband. It is all the more difficult when two thirds of you are busy elsewhere, up on the hill, down among the gears. Miss Trant did what she could, however, and very soon Mrs. Tipstead, who was not equal to the task of

keeping up her stiff genteel manner, began pouring out her confidences.

From *The Good Companions* J. B. PRIESTLEY
(By permission of the author.)

G

As time went on Josephine's fury did not slacken; no, it became greater; and it passed through a dozen or more phases every day. Thus at one moment she would laugh with pity for such a poor fool as John, in the next marvel that such a creature should have the sense to know where he belonged, then turn all her rage on the Zoological Society for causing such an outrage to decency to occur in their grounds, and reflect bitterly on the folly of mankind who were ready to divert themselves at such a sorry spectacle as the degraded John—reducing themselves indeed to his level. Again, she would exclaim at the vanity which led him to such a course; anything would do so long as he got himself talked about. No doubt he would see that she, Josephine, was talked about too. Indeed, John, she declared, had done it solely to affront her. But he had gone the wrong way to work if he thought he would impress her. She would indeed go to see him and show him how little she cared for him; no, what was better, she would go visit the other ape next door to him. That was the way by which she could best show him her indifference to him, and her superiority to the vulgar mob of sightseers. Nothing would induce her to look at such a base creature as John. She could not regard his action with indifference. It was a calculated insult, but fortunately he would alone suffer for it, for as for herself she had never cared in the least for him, and her complete indifference was not likely to be ruffled by his latest escapade. Indeed it meant no more to her than any other creature being exhibited.

From *A Man in the Zoo* DAVID GARNETT
(By permission of the publishers, Chatto and Windus.)

EXERCISE

1. State briefly what you consider to be the mood or the mental state described in each of the foregoing paragraphs.
2. Upon what details does each depend for its effect?
3. Distinguish between those details that pertain to thought or feeling and those that pertain to action or gesture.
4. Select the most effective sentences in each extract and give reasons for your choice.
5. Without using the words employed here to designate the theme, describe a "sharper", a deceiver, a boaster, a simpleton, a recluse, an impostor, a winner, or a schemer.
6. Describe an animal, a person, or a situation in which the mood is one of the following: terror, expectancy, relief, mystery, indifference, unrest, anger, passivity, hopelessness, misery, happiness.

Groups

Models

A

But at the next stopping places other passengers climbed into the carriage; and five complete strangers soon shared the grained wood box in which we were enclosed. There was a lady in black, with her hair smoothed up under her bonnet, and a long pale nose; and up against her sat her little boy, a fine, fair, staring child of about five years of age. A black-clothed, fat little man with a rusty leather bag, over the lock of which he kept clasped his finger and thumb, quietly seated himself. He cast but one dark glance about him and immediately shut his eyes. In the corner was an older man with a beard under his chin, gaiters, and a hard, wide-brimmed hat. Besides these, there was a fat country-woman on the same side as Pollie and I, whom I could hear breathing and could not see, and a dried-up, bird-eyed woman opposite in a check shawl, with heavy metal ear-

rings dangling at her ears. She sat staring blankly and bleakly at things close as if they were at a distance.

From *The Memoirs of a Midget* WALTER DE LA MARE
(By permission of the author.)

B

And up the broad street, now comparatively hushed, a little band of six,—a man of about fifty, short, stout, with bushy hair protruding from under a round black felt hat, a most unimportant-looking person, who carried a small portable organ such as is customarily used by street preachers and singers. And with him a woman perhaps five years his junior, taller, not so broad, but solid of frame and vigorous, very plain in face and dress, and yet not homely, leading with one hand a small boy of seven and in the other carrying a Bible and several hymn books. With these three, but walking independently behind, was a girl of fifteen, a boy of twelve and another girl of nine, all following obediently, but not too enthusiastically, in the wake of the others.

From *An American Tragedy* THEODORE DREISER
(Published by Liveright, Inc., Copyright, 1925.
By permission of the author.)

EXERCISE

1. What is the general impression made by the group upon the reader? Where are the people? How are they dressed? Why are they assembled? What are they doing? What are they saying? What are their facial expressions? Is the writer a member of the group or only an observer?

2. Adapting the foregoing suggestions to your needs, describe a group in one of the following places or situations:

A bargain counter; A motor accident; A court room; A ball game; An auction sale; A dog fight; A mob scene on the stage; A dancing class; A railway station; A class room; A fire; A teachers' meeting as I imagine it; The

school cafeteria at noon; A masquerade, or any other situation you can think of.

Take advantage of all the contrasts that present themselves to make your group interesting to your reader.

Literary Descriptions

Frequently a writer draws upon imagination or reflection to suggest more vivid impressions or mental pictures to his reader. Provided he does not reach beyond the limits of probability or what is consistent with his subject, he can invent interesting effects. The most popular and effective descriptions used today are subjective and suggestive rather than objective and evident. What are the imaginative, reflective, or suggestive elements in the following literary descriptions?

Models

A

Feeling that he was trespassing, he walked to the western side of the house, climbed the stone steps and rang the bell, which gave forth a jangle far away to his left. No one answered the bell though he rang a second time. Little scraps of plaster were scaling off the wall by the bell-pull; the forest behind the house needed cutting back: it was coming too close with its evil and its darkness. The noise of its sighing was like the whispering of heirs about a death-bed.

From *Sard Harker*

JOHN MASEFIELD

B

One gets a measure of the quality of this force of mechanical, of inhuman, growth as one marks the great statue of Liberty on our larboard, which is meant to dominate the scene. It gets to three hundred feet about, by

standing on a pedestal of a hundred and fifty; and the uplifted torch, seen against the sky, suggests an arm straining upward, straining in hopeless competition with the fierce commercial altitudes ahead. Poor liberating lady of the American ideal. One passes her and forgets.

H. G. WELLS

(By permission of the author.)

C

And this is the wonder of Mawne; that right in the heart of the works where the very air is acrid on the tongue and all the earth overlaid with cinders, you are conscious all the time of a sweet enveloping countryside, smooth hills and wooded dingles which stand waiting upon the edge of that parched and blackened shell of a country. Here through the very crowding of the sky with dust and carbon, the sunsets are often dazzlingly beautiful, breaking into caverns of molten gold beside which the furnace fires are pale.

From *The Iron Age*

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

(By permission of the author.)

D

In the corner of the great kitchen, during all these days, the jolly old oven roared and crackled in volcanic billows of flame, snapping and gurgling as if the old fellow entered with joyful sympathy into the frolic of the hour, and then, his great heart being once warmed up, he brooded over successive generations of pies and cakes, which went in raw and came out cooked, till butteries and dressers and shelves and pantries were literally crowded with a jostling abundance.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE

E

Fishes

An aquarium is to me a very attractive place, and I continually regret the absence of one from London. The

spectacle of fish moving mysteriously and indeed magically through the water in which we die but they have their wonderful life is one that never becomes tedious. It has been said of kittens that they cannot do anything that is not beautiful; and the remark is no less true of fish. Every movement and every pause are alike beautiful, with this added element of strangeness, remoteness and perfect silence. One watches and hears no sound.

From *A Wanderer in Paris*

E. V. LUCAS

(By permission of the author, and the publishers,
Methuen & Co., Ltd.)

F

Have you ever questioned the long shuttered front of an old Italian house, that motionless mask, smooth, mute, equivocal as the face of a priest behind which buzz the secrets of the confessional? Other houses declare the activities they shelter; they are the clear expressive cuticle of a life flowing close to the surface; but the old palace in its narrow street, the villa on its cypress-hooded hill, are as impenetrable as death. The tall windows are like blind eyes, the great door is a shut mouth. Inside there may be sunshine, the scent of myrtles and a pulse of life through all the arteries of the huge frame; or a mortal solitude, where bats lodge in the disjointed stones and the keys rust in unused doors.

EDITH WHARTON

From "The Duchess at Prayer" in *Crucial Instances*

(By permission of the author and the publishers,
Charles Scribner's Sons.)

G

A Vision of Mars

The attention of Mr. Cave had been speedily directed to the bird-like creatures he had seen so abundantly present in each of his earlier visions. His first impression was soon corrected, and he considered for a time that they might represent a diurnal species of bat. Then he thought, gro-

tesquely enough, that they might be cherubs. Their heads were round and curiously human, and it was the eyes of one of them that had so startled him on his second observation. They had broad, silvery wings, not feathered, but glistening almost as brilliantly as new-killed fish and with the same subtle play of colour, and these wings were not built on the plan of bird-wing or bat, Mr. Wace learned, but supported by curved ribs radiating from the body. (A sort of butterfly wing with curved ribs seems best to express their appearance.) The body was small, but fitted with two bunches of prehensile organs, like long tentacles, immediately under the mouth. Incredible as it appeared to Mr. Wace, the persuasion at last became irresistible that it was these creatures which owned the great quasi-human buildings and magnificent garden that made the broad valley so splendid. And Mr. Cave perceived that the buildings with other peculiarities, had no doors, but that the great circular windows, which opened freely, gave the creatures egress and entrance. They would alight upon their tentacles, fold their wings to a smallness almost rod-like, and hop into the interior. But among them was a multitude of smaller-winged creatures, like great dragon-flies and moths and flying beetles, and across the greensward brilliantly-coloured gigantic ground-beetles crawled lazily to and fro. Moreover, on the causeways and terraces, large-headed creatures similar to the greater winged flies, but wingless, were visible, hopping busily upon their hand-like tangle of tentacles.

From *Tales of the Unexpected*

H. G. WELLS

(By permission of the author.)

EXERCISE

1. Write literary descriptions on any of the following:

The reflections of an elephant or a camel in a zoo; a dog following his master; a cat waiting for milk; a wild duck in flight; meeting a royal personage; meeting a great actor;

on being mayor for a day; the captain of a liner; night in a cemetery; the approach to a house of mystery; my impression of Edinburgh Castle or St. Paul's Cathedral; a mediaeval banquet hall; a whale disporting himself; life on the moon or at the bottom of a tropical sea.

2. Describe a new automobile in any three of the following ways:

As seen by (a) the owner; (b) a poor boy; (c) a mechanic; (d) the salesman; (e) a tramp; (f) a person learning to drive.

Descriptive Narrative

Models

A

Description of Betty, Packing

Betty was packing.

She had dragged down from the attic her large cabin trunk, and then decided not to use it. Now it lay across the doorway, barring the entrance, and occupying a large part of the tiny room.

On the bed, stripped of bedclothes, were the two cane chairs. One had fallen sideways against the wall, and appeared to lean drunkenly at its upright mate. Partly on the chair, partly on the bed, lay Betty's hat and coat, while her gloves had fallen down on to the trunk.

All the drawers of the dressing-table were pulled out. They were cleared save for an odd handkerchief or stocking, and one or two books and papers. On the dressing-table itself was a vase containing numerous buttonholes of faded flowers. Beside it lay a pair of scissors, and a box of powder. There was also a huge, three-quarters empty box of chocolates, from which Betty was continually helping herself, in an effort to finish it before she left.

Surrounded by a litter of books, a hot-water bottle sat

solemnly on the window-seat, while a racquet balanced itself half in and half out of the open window. A patent leather hat-box, filled to bursting, stood fastened and ready beside an open suit-case, whose lid was supported at an angle of thirty degrees by its contents.

Betty herself added to the picture. She stood in the remaining space, surrounded by paper and string. She had taken off and subsequently trodden on, her sleeveless cardigan, and her skirt was twisted round so that the side-pleat was at the back. One blouse sleeve was rolled up; the other, undone at the cuff, flapped in the breeze. As she stooped, her hair fell over her face, which was red with fury and exertion. She was waving a pair of shoes, which she had forgotten to pack, and for which there was no possible room. In a loud and abusive soliloquy she was proclaiming her woes.

Meanwhile the taxi had arrived.

C. E. C. FRASER, *The Bookman*

B

Night-Lines

Night-lines in the Thames were illegal; but one night-line, at least, was set. It was a line which terminated in six feet of green-stained gut, which was at that time esteemed as better than gut unstained; it was held in the eddies by a flat leger-head, painted green, and the bait on a crystal hook was the tail of a carefully cleaned lob-worm. It was set in the meeting of the currents at the corner below Sixth form bench, in the dusk of a November afternoon; and in the dark of the next morning, a quarter of an hour before early school, it was visited and lifted. And there at the end of it, tugging and fighting, was a large dace. I do not guess at his length or weight, but he remains the greatest of all dace since taken; he brings back to me, with the grey-green of his scales and the slender shape of him pulling at the green gut in the eddies, the cold and dark of that

November morning, the smell of the river water, the wind blowing on wet fingers and a soaked line.

From *Eton in the Eighties*

ERIC PARKER

(By permission of the publishers, John Murray.)

C

The Osprey and the Trout

With a convulsive surge of his broad-fluked, muscular tail he tried to dive, and for a second drew his assailant clean under. But in the next moment the osprey, with a mighty beating of wings which thrashed the water into foam, forced him to the surface and lifted him clear. But he was too heavy for his captor and almost immediately he found himself partly back in his own element, sufficiently submerged to make mighty play with his lashing tail. For all his frantic struggles, however, he could not again get clear under, so as to make full use of his strength; and neither could his adversary, for all his tremendous flapping, succeed in holding him in the air for more than a second or two at a time.

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

From *The Fishers of the Air*

EXERCISE

1. Select the descriptive phrases in the narratives given above.
2. Write a descriptive narrative on one of the following subjects:

a girl combing her hair; a boy kicking a ball; a race; a man ploughing; an old woman buying a railway ticket; an accident at a circus; a bear or a hawk fishing; a detective in pursuit; a magician performing a trick; a thrilling encounter; wild animals I have met; a visit to a cave.

XIII

THE SKETCH

A SKETCH is a narrative that may contain one or all of the following features in varying quantity and intensity; description, character portrayal, humour and emotion. It does not contain a plot, but it should give a sense of unity and progression. It may portray vividly a character, a strong emotion, a dramatic situation, or a scene from nature. It is such a piece of writing as may be later incorporated in a longer work, such as an essay or a story; or it may be done for its own worth and retained as part of the writer's album. The following pieces of writing, like much of the work of Peter McArthur, are sketches because they are neither essays nor stories, and yet they have the literary charm and atmosphere of both these forms.

Models

A

Driving the Last Spike

"Go, sell your boots, and buy C.P.R. stock," said Cornelius Van Horne to an impatient creditor during the darkest days of the Canadian Pacific. The syndicate had undertaken the impossible, to fling a railway across a wild, unpeopled continent. Undreamed-of obstacles rose, costs mounted, rocks took more and more money to move, timid men faltered as they saw millions vanish with little hope of ever reaping a profit.

The Spring of 1885 saw the railway nearly finished, and an impressive demonstration of its value was the quick transport of troops to crush the Rebellion. Now, if ever, surely the Government would advance money to see it through. George Stephen camped at Ottawa, Van Horne at Montreal stretched the last few dollars in the till as if they were elastic. But still Sir John A. Macdonald refused further aid.

"Pay car can't be sent out, and unless we get relief we must stop," wired Van Horne to Stephen.

Sir Frank Smith of Toronto and others pressed the Premier to save the day, and at last came a new deal, with a temporary loan, with a bond issue and the work went on. When a London cable announced that the bonds had been quickly sold, Van Horne and Angus vented their relief by "capering about like boys and by kicking the furniture," according to official account.

Mile by mile the contractors closed the gaps of the steel highway, crossing the continent first traversed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie in 1793. On Nov. 7, 1885, the last spike was driven at a spot in Eagle Pass between Sicamous and the slopes of the Gold Range. Donald Smith, afterwards Lord Strathcona, drove the spike home in the presence of elated officials, contractors and others. Work for which ten years had been allowed by the Government had been finished in less than five years.

Montreal and Vancouver were thus united by bands of steel, 2,905 miles long, an Imperial highway was completed, an outlet for the mounting prairie harvest was opened toward two oceans, an inlet for teas and silks from the Orient was created.

A new chapter in Canadian history had begun.

M. O. HAMMOND

(By permission of the author, and
The Robert Simpson Company Limited.)

B

The School for Sympathy

I had heard a great deal about Miss Beam's school, but not till last week did the chance come to visit it.

The cabman drew up at a gate in an old wall, about a mile out of the town. I noticed as I was waiting for him to give me change that the Cathedral spire was visible down the road. I rang the bell, the gate automatically opened, and I found myself in a pleasant garden facing a square red ample Georgian house, with the thick white window-frames that to my eyes always suggest warmth and welcome and stability. There was no one in sight but a girl of about twelve, with her eyes covered with a bandage, who was being led carefully between the flower-beds by a little boy of some four years her junior. She stopped, and evidently asked who it was that had come in, and he seemed to be describing me to her. Then they passed on, and I entered the door which a smiling parlour-maid—that pretty sight!—was holding open for me.

Miss Beam was all that I had expected—middle-aged, authoritative, kindly, and understanding. Her hair was beginning to turn grey, and her figure had a fulness likely to be comforting to a homesick child.

We talked idly for a little while, and then I asked her some questions as to her scholastic methods, which I had heard were simple.

“Well,” she said, “we don’t as a matter of fact do much teaching here. The children that come to me—small girls and smaller boys—have very few formal lessons: no more than is needful to get application into them, and those only of the simplest—spelling, adding, subtracting, multiplying, writing. The rest is done by reading to them and by illustrated discourses, during which they have to sit still and keep their hands quiet. Practically there are no other lessons at all.”

"But I have heard so much," I said, "about the originality of your system."

Miss Beam smiled. "Ah, yes," she said. "I am coming to that. The real aim of this school is not so much to instil thought as thoughtfulness—humanity, citizenship. That is the ideal I have always had, and happily there are parents good enough to trust me to try and put it into execution. Look out of the window a minute, will you?"

I went to the window, which commanded a large garden and playground at the back.

"What do you see?" Miss Beam asked.

"I see some very beautiful grounds," I said, "and a lot of jolly children; but what perplexes me, and pains me too, is to notice that they are not all as healthy and active as I should wish. As I came in I saw one poor little thing being led about owing to some trouble with her eyes, and now I can see two more in the same plight; while there is a girl with a crutch just under the window watching the others at play. She seems to be a hopeless cripple."

Miss Beam laughed. "Oh, no," she said; "she's not lame, really; this is only her lame day. Nor are those others blind; it is only their blind day." I must have looked very much astonished, for she laughed again. "There you have an essential part of our system in a nutshell. In order to get a real appreciation and understanding of misfortune into these young minds we make them participants in misfortune too. In the course of the term every child has one blind day, one lame day, one deaf day, one maimed day, one dumb day. During the blind day their eyes are bandaged absolutely, and it is a point of honour not to peep. The bandage is put on overnight; they wake blind. This means that they need assistance in everything, and other children are told off to help them and lead them about. It is educative to both of them—the blind and the helpers.

"There is no privation about it," Miss Beam continued. "Every one is very kind, and it is really something of a

joke, although, of course, before the day is over the reality of the affliction must be apparent even to the least thoughtful. The blind day is, of course, really the worst," she went on, "but some of the children tell me that the dumb day is the most dreaded. There, of course, the child must exercise will-power only, for the mouth is not bandaged. . . . But come down into the garden and see for yourself how the children like it."

Miss Beam led me to one of the bandaged girls, a little, merry thing, whose eyes under the folds were, I felt sure, as black as ash-buds. "Here's a gentleman come to talk to you," said Miss Beam, and left us.

"Don't you ever peep?" I asked, by way of an opening.

"Oh, no," she exclaimed; "that would be cheating. But I'd no idea it was so awful to be blind. You can't see a thing. One feels one is going to be hit by something every moment. Sitting down's such a relief."

"Are your guides kind to you?" I asked.

"Pretty good. Not so careful as I shall be when it's my turn. Those that have been blind already are the best. It's perfectly ghastly not to see. I wish you'd try!"

"Shall I lead you anywhere?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," she said; "let's go for a little walk. Only you must tell me about things. I shall be so glad when to-day's over. The other bad days can't be half as bad as this. Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun, I guess. Having an arm tied up is a little more troublesome, because you have to get your food cut up for you, and so on; but it doesn't really matter. And as for being deaf for a day, I shan't mind that—at least, not much. But being blind is so frightening. My head aches all the time, just from dodging things that probably aren't there. Where are we now?"

"In the playground," I said, "going towards the house. Miss Beam is walking up and down the terrace with a tall girl."

"What has the girl got on?" my companion asked.

"A blue serge skirt and pink blouse."

"I think it's Millie," she said. "What colour hair?"

"Very light," I said.

"Yes, that's Millie. She's the head girl. She's awfully decent."

"There's an old man tying up roses," I said.

"Yes, that's Peter. He's the gardener. He's hundreds of years old!"

"And here comes a dark girl in red, on crutches."

"Yes," she said; "that's Beryl."

And so we walked on, and in steering this little thing about I discovered that I was ten times more thoughtful already than I had any notion of, and also that the necessity of describing the surroundings to another makes them more interesting.

When Miss Beam came to release me I was quite sorry to go, and said so.

"Ah!" she replied; "then there is something in my system after all!"

I walked back to the town murmuring (inaccurately as ever) the lines:—

Can I see another's woe

And not share their sorrows too?

O no, never can it be,

Never, never, can it be.

From *Old Lamps for New*

E. V. LUCAS

(By permission of the author, and the publishers,
Methuen & Co., Ltd.)

EXERCISE

1. What different kinds of material go to the composition of each of these sketches?

2. What characteristics of style and what literary devices can you find in each?

3. Write a sketch in imitation of "Driving the Last Spike", on any incident, character, or scene suggested by your reading of history.

4. Write a sketch on an experience concerning flowers, birds, butterflies, or any nature-hike that you have taken.

5. Write a sketch on one of the following subjects:

The decay of a pleasant custom (New Year's Day Calling; "bees"; garden parties); the passing of the toll gate and the old hotel at the "corners"; the rural school house as a community centre; on driving a car, or motor intelligence; digression is the better part of travel; on being a Canadian; on trying to please everybody; on buying something you did not want; a simple process for making enemies; the joys of learning; gossip as a reflection of character; a dream in a library; a modern Mohawk.

BOOKS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

Open a book in the braced spirit with which you would listen to a great man. Read with the whole of your brain and soul. Tire yourself (would you not tire yourself at tennis?). Reflect! After an interval read again. By this process, and by no other, will a book enter into you, become a part of you, and reappear in your life. ARNOLD BENNETT

| | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| <i>Narrative Technique</i> | Uzzell | Harcourt, Brace |
| <i>The Craft of Fiction</i> | Lubbock | Jonathan Cape |
| <i>The Handling of Words</i> | Lee | John Lane |
| <i>The Glory of English</i> | | |
| <i>Prose</i> | Coleridge | Putnam |
| <i>First Steps to Parnassus</i> | Williams | Clarke, Irwin |
| <i>The Romance of Words</i> | Weekley | Murray |

XIV

THE ESSAY

FOR three centuries, the essay has been a popular form of writing and reading, and in that time the names of many famous authors have been added to those of the illustrious essayists Montaigne and Bacon. Addison, Swift, Hunt, Hazlitt, Lamb, De Quincey, Goldsmith, Macaulay, Carlyle, Ruskin, Stevenson, Chesterton, Lucas, Lynd, Gardiner and Hudson have all used this form to offer their reflections upon a great variety of subjects and, incidentally, to express rich and charming personalities.

The Aim of the Essay

Generally speaking, essays may be divided into two classes: those like Addison's and Lamb's are addressed to the emotions, and those like Bacon's and Macaulay's are addressed to the intellect. The aim of the essayist varies with his subject and his readers. He may start with a commonplace incident like putting on his shoes, with a sentence from the daily press, or with a clerk's observation on life, but whatever the subject be, he must expand, expound and interpret it to his reader's delight. His purpose may be to enlarge his reader's understanding, to convince, to rouse to action, to impress, to create sentiment, to enthrone an ideal, or merely to entertain. The best type of modern essay appeals to the

reader because it reflects a charming and delightful mind. No amount of literary skill will make up for the commonplace opinions of a dull mind.

The Nature of the Essay

The essay is a form of subjective or introspective writing. It presents a wide range of subjects, and it allows the author unlimited freedom in his method of treatment. The essential attribute of the essay, however, is the autobiographical element, the author's mood, outlook, fancies and reflections. The essayist allows the reader to look into his mind, to think and feel with him, and it is largely this personal quality which distinguishes the essay from other forms of writing.

The Structure of the Essay

The term essay means an assay, or an attempt at something. The essay does not require a plot, but it must have a plan. The essayist begins with some core-idea which is ever present, but not always evident to the reader. The effect is produced by the unity of the governing details. He may introduce anecdotes, characterization, and even description, but all details must be relevant and illuminating. It is in his choice of these details that the essayist reveals his personality and the particular point of view which sets him apart from the rest of mankind. He may appear to ramble, but he must eventually arrive at a definite goal. The reader must be made to feel that the theme is gathering weight as it proceeds. The essay may depend for its plan upon a mere association of ideas, but the core-idea which gives it unity must never be far away. The essayist may

chat informally, but he must talk with good sense and to some point. In his treatment of his theme, however, there need be no finality.

Model

On Writing an Article

I was putting on my boots just now in what the novelists call "a brown study." There was no urgent reason for putting on my boots. I was not going out, and my slippers were much more comfortable. But something had to be done. I wanted a subject for an article. Now if you are accustomed to writing articles for a living you will know that sometimes the difficulty is not writing the article, but choosing a subject. It is not that subjects are few: it is that they are so many. It is not poverty you suffer from, but an embarrassment of riches. You are like Buridan's ass. That wretched creature starved between two bundles of hay because he could not make up his mind which bundle to turn to first. And in that he was not unlike many human beings. There was an eighteenth-century statesman, for example, who used to find it so difficult to make a choice that he would stand at his door looking up the street and down the street, and finally go inside again, because he couldn't decide whether to go up or down. He would stay indoors all the morning considering whether he should ride out or walk out, and he would spend all the afternoon regretting that he had done neither one nor the other.

I have always had a great deal of sympathy with that personage, for I share his temperamental indecision. I hate making up my mind. If I go into a shop to choose a pair of trousers my infirmity of purpose grows with every new sample that is shown me, and finally I choose the wrong thing in a fit of desperation. If the question is a place for a holiday, all the artifices of my family cannot extract from me a decided preference for any place in particular. Bourne-

mouth? Certainly. How jolly that walk along the sands by Poole Harbour to Studland and over the hills to Swanage. But think of the Lake District . . . and North Wales . . . and Devon . . . and Cornwall . . . and . . . I do not so much make decisions as drift into them or fall into them. I am what you might call an Eleventh Hour Man. I take a header just as the clock is about to strike for the last time.

This common failing of indecision is not necessarily due to intellectual laziness. It may be due, as in the case of Goschen, to too clear a vision of all the aspects of a subject. "Goschen," said a famous First Sea Lord, "was the cleverest man we ever had at the Admiralty, and the worst administrator. He saw so many sides to a question that we could never get anything done." A sense of responsibility, too, is a severe check on action. I doubt whether anyone who has dealt with affairs ever made up his mind with more painful questionings than Lord Morley. I have heard him say how burdensome he found the India Office, because day by day he had to make irrevocable decisions. A certain adventurous recklessness is necessary for the man of affairs. Joseph Chamberlain had that quality. Mr. Churchill has it to-day. If it is controlled by high motives and a wide vision it is an incomparable gift. If it is a mere passion for having one's own way it is only the gift of the gambler.

But, you ask, what has this to do with putting on my boots? It is a reasonable question. I will tell you. For an hour I had paced my room in my slippers in search of a subject. I had looked out of the window over the sunlit valley, watched the smoke of a distant train vanishing towards the west, observed the activities of the rooks in a neighbouring elm. I had pared my nails several times with absent-minded industry, and sharpened every pencil I had on me with elaborate care. But the more I pared my nails and the more I sharpened my pencils the more perplexed I grew as to the theme for an article. Subjects crowded upon me, "not single spies, but in battalions." They jostled each

other for preference, they clamoured for notice as I have seen the dock-labourers clamouring for a job at the London docks. They held out their hands and cried, "Here am I: take me." And, distracted by their importunities and starving in the midst of plenty, I fished in my pocket for a pencil I had not sharpened. There wasn't one left.

It was at this moment that I remembered my boots. Yes, I would certainly put on my boots. There was nothing like putting on one's boots for helping one to make up one's mind. The act of stooping changed the current of the blood. You saw things in a new light—like the man who looked between his legs at Bolton Abbey, and cried to his friend: "Oh, look this way; it's extraordinary what a fresh view you get." So I fetched my boots and sat down to put them on.

The thing worked like a charm. For in my preoccupied condition I picked up my right boot first. Then mechanically I put it down and seized the left boot. "Now why," said I, "did I do that?" And then the fact flashed on me that all my life I had been putting on my left boot first. If you had asked me five minutes before which boot I put on first, I should have said that there was no first about it; yet now I found I was in the grip of a habit so fixed that the attempt to put on my right boot first affected me like the scraping of a harsh pencil on a slate. The thing couldn't be done. The whole rhythm of habit would be put out of joint. I became interested. Now how, I wondered, do I put on my jacket? I rose, took it off, found that my right arm slipped automatically into its sleeve, tried the reverse process, discovered that it was as difficult as an unfamiliar gymnastic operation. Why, said I, I am a mere bundle of little habits of which I am unconscious. This thing must be looked into. And then came into my mind that fascinating book of Samuel Butler's on *Life and Habit*. Yes, certainly, here was a subject that would "go". I dismissed all the importunate

beggars who had been clamouring in my mind, took out a pencil, seized a writing pad, and sat down to write on "The Force of Habit."

And here I am. I have got to the end of my article without reaching my subject. I have looked up and down the street so long that it is time to go indoors.

From *Pebbles on the Shore*

A. G. GARDINER

(By permission of the publishers, J. M. Dent and Sons, Limited.)

ANALYSIS OF MODEL

1. Show that A. G. Gardiner has an appetency for commonplace subjects.
2. What is the reaction of the reader to such a subject?
3. What is the core-idea in this essay?
4. Show that this essay is logically arranged and that its author has a sense of proportion and climax. Is suspense felt at any point? How is it attained?
5. Are the allusions and anecdotes mere digressions or do they illuminate the subject?
6. The author tells the reader of his own short-comings. What is the effect of such confidences on the reader?
7. Find adjectives to describe A. G. Gardiner's humour.
8. Select six original and interesting phrases.
9. Find examples of appropriate similes, metaphors and antitheses.
10. Find at least one reflection upon life and affairs, and estimate its value to the reader.
11. To how many different elements does this essay owe its human appeal?
12. Find examples of colloquial language or conversational style.
13. Why does the last sentence give the effect of unity to the essay?

14. Show that there is unity within the paragraphs and coherence between them.

15. Show that one of A. G. Gardiner's characteristics is the power to give the effect of sudden completeness to an essay.

16. To what does this essay owe its charm?

(A. G. Gardiner has "the essay touch", an eye for the significance of things that apparently are of small importance, a quiet playful spirit, a graceful manner, an apt and prim word for every thought or mood, and the gift of simple, direct, economical and forceful expression.)

17. What does this essay reveal of the author's personality—his outlook on life, nature, men and affairs, his originality, his ingenuity and craftsmanship, his power to interest, inform and entertain the reader?

18. Find adjectives to describe the style of this author.

19. How do you account for A. G. Gardiner's popularity as an essayist?

(He is always interesting and instructive. From a large stock of information, anecdote and experience, he draws material for essays on log fires, reading in bed, umbrella morals, talking to one's self, and short legs and long legs. On a host of such apparently commonplace subjects, he writes as if they are among the major facts of life, and he makes the ordinary man feel that he after all does count for something in the scheme of things. His style is never ponderous or pedantic, but it is easy, informal and readable. With the gentle and mellow humour of *Elia*, he takes the reader into his confidence and tells him of his own short-comings. With the gusto of one who loves the freshness and peace of fields and country roads, he despises the silly conventions of a mean and dull society. In shirt sleeves and hiking boots Alpha of the Plough is host to all readers who like to find humour and wisdom in a style that resembles the conversation of cultured people.)

Model

Sunday Before the War

On Sunday, in a remote valley in the West of England, where the people are few and scattered and placid, there was no more sign among them than among the quiet hills of the anxiety that holds the world. They had no news and seemed to want none. The postmaster had been ordered to stay all day in his little post-office, and that was something unusual that interested them, but only because it affected the postmaster.

It rained in the morning, but the afternoon was clear and glorious and shining, with all the distances revealed far into the heart of Wales and to the high ridges of the Welsh mountains. The cottages of that valley are not gathered into villages, but two or three together or lonely among their fruit-trees on the hillside; and the cottagers, who are always courteous and friendly, said a word or two as one went by, but just what they would have said on any other day and without any question about the war. Indeed, they seemed to know, or to wish to know, as little about that as the earth itself, which, beautiful there at any time, seemed that afternoon to wear an extreme and pathetic beauty. The country, more than any other in England, has the secret of peace. It is not wild, though it looks into the wilderness of Wales; but all its cultivation, its orchards and hopyards and fields of golden wheat, seem to have the beauty of time upon them, as if men there had long lived happily upon the earth with no desire for change nor fear of decay. It is not the sad beauty of a past cut off from the present, but a mellowness that the present inherits from the past; and in the mellowness all the hillside seems a garden to the spacious farmhouses and the little cottages; each led up to by its own narrow, flowery lane. There the meadows are all lawns with the lustrous green of spring even in August, and often

over-shadowed by old fruit-trees—cherry, or apple, or pear; and on Sunday after the rain there was an April glory and freshness added to the quiet of the later summer.

Nowhere and never in the world can there have been a deeper peace; and the bells from the little red church down by the river seemed to be the music of it, as the song of birds is the music of spring. There one saw how beautiful the life of man can be, and how men by the innocent labours of many generations can give to the earth a beauty it has never known in its wildness. And all this peace, one knew, was threatened; and the threat came into one's mind as if it were a soundless message from over the great eastward plain; and with it the beauty seemed unsubstantial and strange, as if it were sinking away into the past, as if it were only a memory of childhood.

So it is always when the mind is troubled among happy things, and then one almost wishes they could share one's troubles and become more real with it. It seemed on that Sunday that a golden age had lasted till yesterday, and that the earth had still to learn the news of its ending. And this change had come, not by the will of God, not even by the will of man, but because some few men far away were afraid to be open and generous with each other. There was a power in their hands so great that it frightened them. There was a spring that they knew they must not touch, and, like mischievous and nervous children, they had touched it at last, and now all the world was to suffer for their mischief.

So the next morning one saw a reservist in his uniform saying goodbye to his wife and children at his cottage-gate and then walking up the hill that leads out of the valley with a cheerful smile still on his face. There was the first open sign of trouble, a very little one, and he made the least of it; and, after all, this valley is very far from any possible war, and its harvest and its vintage of berry and cider will surely be gathered in peace.

But what happiness can there be in that peace, or what security in the mind of man, when the madness of war is let loose in so many other valleys? Here there is a beauty inherited from the past, and added to the earth by man's will; but the men here are of the same nature and subject to the same madness as those who are gathering to fight on the frontiers. We are all men with the same power of making and destroying, with the same divine foresight mocked by the same animal blindness. We ourselves may not be in fault to-day, but it is human beings in no way different from us who are doing what we abhor and they abhor even while they do it. There is a fate, coming from the beast in our own past, that the present man in us has not yet mastered, and for the moment that fate seems a malignity in the nature of the universe that mocks us even in the beauty of these lonely hills. But it is not so, for we are not separate and indifferent like the beasts; and if one nation for the moment forgets our common humanity and its future, then another must take over that sacred charge and guard it without hatred or fear until the madness is passed. May that be our task now, so that we may wage war only for the future peace of the world and with the lasting courage that needs no stimulant of hate.

From *Thoughts on the War*

A. CLUTTON-BROCK

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ANALYSIS OF MODEL

1. Make a list of the main thoughts expressed in this essay.
2. Show how they are introduced, developed and emphasized.
3. What is the effect of the whole essay upon the reader? Does it convince or persuade him of anything?
4. Show that there is unity within the paragraphs and coherence between them.
5. What is the structural significance of the line "And all this peace, one knew, was threatened"?

6. Contrast words like peace, beauty, quiet, mellowness, spaciousness, in the first half of this essay with the theme words in the second half. Account for the change in diction and describe the effect produced by each group.

7. Select ten original, apt and beautiful phrases, and account for your choice.

8. Collect all the suggestive or connotative words, and state why they are effective.

9. How many similes and metaphors does this essay contain? Are these figures appropriate to the subject matter?

10. Find examples of colloquial phrases which please because of their simplicity.

11. What is lost by this transcription of paragraph 6, sentence 3: We are all men with the same power of creating and destroying, with the same wisdom mocked by the same ignorance.

12. In paragraph 2, cross out every word that does not flash a concrete image or idea to the mind. What is the percentage of grammatical "mortar" words and of picture-making words?

13. Which paragraph expresses the noblest thought in the simplest form? What special words, phrases and figures contribute to this sublime effect?

14. Read this essay aloud again to hear the melody of the vowel sounds and the flow and ebb of the rhythm. Which paragraph is most rhythmic and pleasing in sound effects?

15. Which is the most imaginative passage and what does it contribute to the essay as a whole?

16. How does this essay reveal a dramatic sense in the author?

17. Gather all the author's reflections upon life and conduct. Why do they challenge the reader? What do they reveal of the writer's personality—his outlook on life and nature?

18. Distinguish between the intellectual, emotional and aesthetic qualities of his style. Find words to describe the style.

In how many different ways has the author appealed to the interest of the reader? Illustrate your choice by reference to the essay.

19. To what does this essay owe its charm and power?

ASSIGNMENT

Make a similar analysis of the two following essays:

A

Fog

An acquaintance has kindly informed me that there is in these scribblings of mine too much introspection, meditation, reflection. "Go out," quoth he, "into the beautiful world, and write down what you see there." I think he is wrong. There is far too much description done as it is. It is easy to go to a place and easy to write a sort of cataloguing description when one goes. Fitly to describe any visible thing whatever is the work of an artist, I question not. But artists are few and easy work is tempting; it seems well to me that some of us scribblers should sit at home and think. The result may not be magnificent, but there is sufficient rarity in the exercise to give it a sort of an odd flavour which may not be so dull to everybody as to my acquaintance. I always follow advice, however, and so, having received this, I took my hat and went out into the beautiful world, with the intention—but it really is a base intention—of writing down what I saw there.

Unfortunately there was a thick fog. Now the cultivated reader is assured, of course, that a London fog is a beautiful thing. But the only writing Londoner who has never described one may as well cling to this negative distinction. Besides, I doubt my aesthetic quality is old-fashioned. Curious, weird, interesting, I perceive a London fog to be; its beauty something eludes my gross vision. A mist, or a light fog, when one can see forty yards about one, has a fugitive fantastic charm, but so has not a dense and

isolating vapour. I could write, with feeling and gratitude at least, of the beauty I saw at dusk, all last week, in the trees and distances of Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens. The lonely grace of the winter trees, their bare tracery, unspeakably delicate, clear against a purple or violet haze in the sky, and the pretty fairyland where the yellow lamps made spots of colour—all this was beauty wonderful and magical, and I blessed my lot for once that I could go and gaze on it day by day. Immediately thereafter to perceive that masses of dirty vapour had their beauty also was too swift a turn for my senses. So I will let the description alone. After all, it has been claimed for a fog that it is a blessing to men of letters, because it forces them in upon themselves, and this fog drove me once more to reflection, since it is fated I should disappoint my acquaintance.

Beauty or none, there is much to be said for a London fog. It gives us all that "change" which we are always needing. When our world is all but invisible, and growing visible bit by bit looks utterly different from its accustomed self, the stupidest of us all can hardly fail to observe a change for our eyes at least as great as there would have been in going to Glasgow. When arriving at one's house or one's club, that monotonous diurnal incident seems an almost incredible feat, accomplished with profound relief and gratitude for a safe deliverance, one has at least an unaccustomed sensation. One is not a man going into his club, but a mariner saved from shipwreck at the last gasp, to be greeted with emotion by erst indifferent waiters. Yes, a fog gives Londoners a more thorough change than going to the Riviera to avoid it. Then it brings out the kindness and cheerfulness, which are their prime claim to honour, into strong relief. True, it also throws into relief the incomparable egoism of the prosperous among them. People with no serious cares or worries in the world of course bemoan and upbraid this trifling inconvenience. But the working,

struggling Londoners, cabmen and 'busmen, you and I, display our indomitable good-humour to advantage. I stayed on top of a 'bus for half an hour in the block on Monday at Hyde Park Corner and talked with the driver. People are often disappointed in a 'bus-driver because they expect a wit and a pretty swearer. They find neither, but they find an overworked man of extraordinary cheerfulness, responsive, ready to laugh. He is master of his business—a fact emphasized by the fog—to a degree refreshing to one whose experience of men professing some practical calling is that the great majority, some from mere stupidity, some from over-hasty enthusiasm, are quite incompetent. When finally I left him, his mate piloted me through wheels and horses to the pavement, and I felt I had been among folk who deserve to live. On Sunday night I walked a mile to my abode, and made a point of asking my whereabouts of every one I met. Not one churlish or even hurried answer: politeness, jokes, reminiscences, laughter. We are a kindly people, and it is worth a fog to know it. Another pleasure of a fog is a mild but extended form of the pleasure we feel when we hear that a millionaire has broken his leg. The too fortunate are suffering a discontent health cannot remove. There was in that block a fat brougham containing an important-looking old man who foamed at the mouth, and one reflected that there was a temporary equality of fortunes.

Such are the pleasures we may take in a London fog. It has also a chastening lesson for us, being a regularly recurring proof that we are not yet civilised enough in the main to make any sacrifice for the public good uncompelled. We shall not provide the right kind of grate until there is a penalty for not doing so. Each citizen will argue that the cost is certain and the benefit, unless the others do the same, as he is sure they will not, insignificant. It is an allegory of more vital matters. The cave-man is strong in us yet. Let

us humble ourselves. But if we are not intelligent enough to abolish fogs, let us be at least sophisticated enough to enjoy them.

G. S. STREET

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Martin Secker Ltd.)

B

The Haunts and Habits of the Beaver

Noiselessly it moved, yet with the swiftness and directness of an arrow, leaving a furrow of ripples in its wake. At last it had come, and I stretched myself out on the rock to enjoy the performance. All evening I had watched this mound of mud and sticks in the middle of the pond, and now my patience was being rewarded. The moonbeams sprayed from the tiny ripples, forming a sliver arrow, as the beaver glided across the pool to the shore, and disappeared.

Fully five minutes later, a faint clicking noise reached my ears, somewhat like the noise made by a red squirrel when he is angry, only much softer. I strained my eyes toward the darkness of the shore but nothing was moving, that is, visibly. Then I noticed it, faint, almost indiscernable in the darkness. The shadow of one of the tall birches, cast upon the lake, was rocking to and fro as though in a high wind. With my eyes glued on the shadow, I moved closer and watched. The swaying increased, then stopped altogether, the clicking sound ceased, and all was still again. Then I heard, for the first time in my existence, the warning thump of the tail, and the tree began to lean.

With a noisy crackling and snapping, the birch leaned farther and farther, then fell in a narrow clearing, without fouling the branches of any of the small cedars around it. I was so taken up with the precision of this felling, that I did not see the beaver take to the water; but I turned my head just in time to see the silver arrow end its course in the mud mound.

I waited patiently, and presently three animals appeared from the thatch and swam to the beach where the fallen tree lay. The chipping noise began once more, only with more volume this time, and there was also an occasional crackling of the underbrush. This cutting continued for fifteen minutes; then I got my first glimpse of the animals themselves. Backing their broad tails against the log which they had cut these animals rolled it down the beach to the water, without a splash. Fascinated, I watched one beaver tow the log, about a yard long, across the pool, and drag one end of it on top of the hut.

This operation was repeated four times, each log being silently floated out to the mound; and there was now a considerable store of wood leaning against the queer mud-house. One of the animals had just come out of the hut and was making for the shore, when I heard the warning thump repeated. Suddenly there was a scurry of small bodies in the underbrush, and the swimmer dived under water. I looked about, wondering where the danger lay, and there, gliding over the face of the pool, a great black shadow was circling, slowly, grimly, like the Angel of Death. I looked up into the dull sky, and saw the snow-white breast of an owl, as it swooped into the forest and vanished with powerful sweeps of its broad wings.

But now there was more action on the shore, and the two beavers appeared, dragging long branches, and, taking to the water, they floated them out to the mound. Then, all three helping, they forced the four logs under water, into the door of the thatch. This was very interesting to observe for the logs were each as big as the three animals together, and to be able to submerge them and force them in the door of the hut, must have been a difficult task for the sturdy little creatures.

Just at this point, a cloud passed over the moon and I was unable to see the pool, but when the light came again, one beaver was cutting up the smaller branches and laying

them all over the mound, taking pains to leave no ends sticking up. The other two kept diving to the bottom, and coming up with their paws full of mud, which they plastered over the mound and padded down with their broad, strong tails. I could not help comparing them to masons putting plaster on walls. First the laths go on, then the plaster is put on and smoothed over with trowels.

And so the work continued, alternately cutting wood and padding mud, until the hut had risen considerably higher above the level of the pool. Thus it was that I left my post when the moon went in, with many confused thoughts in my mind; marvelling at the strength and intelligence which nature has given to all animals, according to their importance in the mechanism of life, and thrilling at the thought of the fine story my experiences would make on the next day. But could I possibly hope to bring out the noiseless atmosphere?

Student's Theme

BOOKS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

Through Literature to

Life

Raymond

Cassell

The Poetic Procession

Roxburgh

Appleton

The Art of Reading

Quiller-Couch

Macmillan

Training in Literary

Appreciation

Pritchard

Harrap (Clarke, Irwin)

Books and Readers

Pritchard

Harrap (Clarke, Irwin)

An Introduction to the

Study of Literature

Hudson

Harrap (Clarke, Irwin)

Literary Taste and How

to Form it

Bennett

Hodder & Stoughton

The Sacred Wood

Eliot

Methuen

Hours in a Library

Stephen

Murray

XV

HOW TO PLAN AN ESSAY

ONE need only analyse the work of any competent essayist to see the joists and beams that give strength and symmetry to the body of an essay. Take away this frame-work and the essay becomes a rambling, incoherent, aimless piece of writing. If the plan, however, becomes an end instead of a means, there is point in the contention that it restricts spontaneity of thought, but a plan which enables the writer to see his subject whole and in its relative parts, in no way interferes with the free growth of his thought. Rather does it keep his thought growing in the right direction. It gives unity and coherence, proportion and emphasis to his thinking. The essay built upon a logical plan will be comprehensible and probably interesting, because the reader is made to feel that the writer knows, at least, where he is going.

To see clearly his objective, is the first duty of the essayist. Since he cannot, in the brief space of his special form, make an exhaustive study of a subject, he must be clear and forceful in his attempt at one phase of it or fail to make his point. He must have a clear idea of the purpose, range and limits of his subject, if he is to know where to begin and where to leave off. How many students sit

immersed in perplexity because they are afraid to decide upon a definite aim or purpose for an essay! And even after this plunge has been taken, they are still submerged in confusion until they arrange their ideas in an order of pertinence to their aim. How much simpler it would be to follow a preconceived course of procedure even in making an outline for an essay!

1. Let the writer examine his stores of information or experience for ideas on a given subject, let us say "The Charm of Old Things". (In a few minutes he can gather enough things which have charm about them to fill a blackboard.)

2. He should restrict the range of his essay to that phase of a subject which he is best able to handle. He might pass over old books, pictures, buildings, customs, weapons, etc., and choose to write on the charm of old china.

3. Having limited the scope of his subject to essay form and length, the writer next decides what impression he wishes to make upon the reader. It may be, he seeks to arouse the reader's aesthetic powers to an appreciation of the beauty or the quaintness of old china.

4. In the next step, suitable materials are collected. The china may come from one country, or century, or company, or all three. The singleness of impression in the essay largely depends for its effectiveness upon the unity of the subject matter. Upon the principle of unity in the selection of materials, also depends the appropriateness and consistency of the writer's tone and style. Method and

matter should co-operate in creating a single whole impression.

5. Closely allied to unity is the principle of coherence. All separate classes or units of material should be made to fit logically and naturally together to create an appropriate sequence. Then, to strengthen or deepen the dominant impression, one vase, cup, or plate, might be placed in such a strategic position as would emphasize its beauty or charm.

6. If the writer is skilful in the use of detail, selects only those particulars that give vitality to his subject, and focuses all his energy upon creating a definite impression, his essay will not seem dull or rambling, but will challenge the reader, awaken his curiosity, and hold his interest.

7. The conclusion of the essay should not be a summary of effects or points, but should evolve naturally from what has gone before. The beginning is more important. By it the writer must catch the reader's interest. A few lines from Rupert Brooke's "Great Love" would make a suitable beginning for an essay on the charm of old china.

In making an outline it is best to write down each of the main ideas in a sentence and then enlarge upon each heading as fully as possible. An essayist's plan should not be so meagre as a speaker's brief. It should contain all the ideas or materials which will appear in the essay. Only by making such an outline can the writer test the logical relationships between ideas, correct any inconsistencies and secure proportion.

The outlines which follow are the results of combined class effort and are presented here merely

to illustrate one of the most useful exercises in the practice of English composition.

THE EFFECT OF RADIO ON OUR LIFE OF TO-DAY

I. *The use of radio is wide-spread*—cities—towns—rural communities—and isolated places.

II. *Why is radio so popular?* There is something new all the time. It affords cheap amusement. It satisfies the gregarious instinct by keeping the individual in touch with the group.

III. *Its popularity is also due to its many uses.* (a) education: lectures—book talks—story hours—recipes—music—drama and jazz. (b) Scientific: ships and airplanes in distress—to broadcast notices of theft. It also provides interest for mechanical people. (c) Amusement: Music in the home—reports on games and prize fights—exercises—dancing and general entertainments.

IV. *The Radio is not without its defects.* It panders to a spirit of laziness and selfishness; it tends to standardize everything; it still gives one nation the power to dictate what the rest of the world shall hear. It has been known to start family quarrels.

V. *On the whole its defects are outweighed by its good effects.* It popularizes the home—it binds the people of the world more closely together and encourages the growth of cosmopolitan feeling and thought—it may be the most important link between the world of today and that of tomorrow.

"OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY!"

I. *How I acquired my passion to travel.* From books of travel and adventure and biographies of

great travellers — explorers — adventures — Marco Polo—Life of Raleigh—Scott's Works—R. M. Ballantyne—*National Geographic*—pictures of life in foreign lands—from tales of returned travellers—collections of curios—gay posters and illustrated itineraries.

II. *How I determined to see the world for myself.* The dark plot, to run away from home—the ride on the freight bumpers—night, hunger, no money—capture and return—but determination to travel not dulled.

III. *How I made the better plan.* Diligent work for several years—saving the pennies—what I did without, pups, pigeons, bicycle, radio, or skates—odd jobs to swell the exchequer.

IV. *How I achieved the plan.* Sufficient money at last—choosing the trip, route, boat, cabin, etc.—preparations, equipment—departure, great expectations.

V. *How my dreams were realized.* Countries visited—sights never to be forgotten—Westminster Abbey—Melrose—Blarney Castle—The Tower—home again laden with souvenirs and memories.

VI. *How I began to plan my next trip.* Love of travel grows—value of travel—a liberal education—cosmopolitan ideas—world sympathy.

MODERN ADVERTISING

I. *The purpose of advertising.* To attract attention—to arouse curiosity—to create and fill a need. (Merchandise, opportunities, investments, and real estate are so advertised.)

II. *Methods.* By arousing interest in the goods by suspense, picture or story—by creating discontent

with what you already have by showing you something better—by creating belief that the article advertised is your need (examples—motor car, soap, business courses, tours, etc.).

III. *Media*. Bill boards (note predominant colours)—posters in street cars and on buildings—electric signs—newspapers—magazines—radio—theatres—store windows.

IV. *Abuses*. Public often deceived (oil shares, mining stock or real estate not always what advertised to be)—good magazines that stand behind their advertisements—unsightly bill boards. (A court in Wales made a brewing company take its sign board off the approach to a golf course)—a leading architect recently said Toronto was “sign mad”.

V. *What constitutes a good advertisement?* It attracts and holds attention to features of goods to be stressed—what they are—how many, examples—a good advertisement is not overburdened with printing or detail—it should be vivid in colour (red, yellow, green, etc.)—large in size—well-proportioned and tell an interesting or amusing story, examples.

VI. *It pays to advertise*. It pays the artist, printer, producer and public—its use is wide-spread—it is a powerful stimulus to every successful business—it has become a wealthy enterprise in itself—advertising is the ear-mark of the age.

The benefits to be derived from plan-making are far reaching. As an objective for class work, the planning of essays tends to clarify a writer's opinions on a variety of subjects. It gives him confidence in

the use of his mental powers, and convinces him of the integrity of his own mind. He learns how to think clearly and plan proportionately. He becomes more observant of the relative importance of ideas. His style, moreover, may be made clearer, more forceful, and more direct because he always knows what he is trying to do.

EXERCISE

"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavours to live the life he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours." THOREAU

Plan and write essays on any of the following topics, or on subjects suggested by them. Choose a subject on which you feel competent to write. Keep the interest of your reader in mind. Avoid naming the essay in the first sentence; rather aim to catch the interest. Do not scatter the interest of the reader by a long introduction, but plunge him directly into the subject. What do you think of a writer who begins with "What is meant by this subject?" or "To deal adequately with this subject, is almost impossible"? Avoid these signals of distress and also such signs of laziness or patronage as *doubtless, surely, for example, to conclude*. Do not write until you have definite ideas to express, and remember that what you think is not so interesting to the reader as why you think it. Style in essay writing is the work of three forces: personality; practical and artistic treatment of theme; and effective use of various literary devices.

Group I:

The world's debt to impractical people; The influence of window-shopping on standards of living; Good spirit in sport (a plea for fewer promoters and better managers);

Reflections of a traffic policeman on human nature; The influence of tradition on our national life; The lure of the sea; My favourite picture; When I am twenty-one; The advantages of travel; The shooting contest; An incident in my life and what it led to; Schools (real and ideal); The lure of travel; On the friends of one's friends; On possessing a sense of humour; Misguided patriotism; On being late; A newspaper account of the Flannan Isle mystery; "It is not enough to do good; one must do it in the right way," John Morley; All virtues are not admirable; My favourite cartoonist and his right to fame; Dress is not always an index of character; A bluffer bluffed; Canada's part in the movement for peace; What I expect my life at University to be; My favourite poem and its merits; Trial by judge or by jury; The call of the wild; True friendship is above reason; The quickest way to make me furious; Reciprocity in the tourist trade; The world does not owe every man a living; Thrift—its meaning, importance, and place in daily life; Photography as an educative hobby; "Not failure but low aim is crime."; When a failure proved a great success (instances from political history or personal experience); How to deal with juvenile crime; The romance of a Persian rug; Music should be made an integral part of all education; Foresight in town planning; Imagination (an asset or a liability); There is no royal road to learning; The level crossing—a constant peril; The habits of some birds in Ontario; The wild flowers of Ontario; Stock figures in fiction; The effect of responsibility of character; A day I should like to live over again; The advantages or disadvantages of competition; Professionalism in sport; The effect of climate on national character; The tyranny of fashion; The national characteristics of Canadians; Science as an agent of civilization; Provincial highways—their maintenance and control; The advantage to Great Britain of her geographical position; Wasted generosity and kindness; Municipalities should establish and

maintain public places of amusement; A trip through a newspaper plant or a grain elevator.

Group II:

What I like to do in spare moments; One dismal night I was alone in the house; An eloquent waste-paper basket; Into the wilderness; Beneath the tower clock; The house with the mysterious shutters; A busy intersection when the signal goes green; Heroes in everyday life; The fickleness of public opinion; A dog show from a dog's point of view; Old friends are best; The interests and pleasures of a country walk; An imaginary journey in a submarine; In the dentist's chair; Shylock after the court scene; Macbeth unsuspected; A visit to Mathematics Land; A day in a side-car; A ride on the back of a whale; My worst fright; When the world ended; When the sky fell; The rocket to Mars that missed its objective; An experience with invisible paint; An interview with Satan; Roads to roam; A day in tight boots.

Group III:

All boys should learn a trade; Polar expeditions are a waste of lives and money; The importance of a national highway; The possibilities of the airplane; "And nothing worth proving can be proved"; The progress of science is destructive of poetry; Discretion of speech is more than eloquence; The good and the evil aspects of sport; Sentiment as a political factor; Science is organized common-sense; Biography is a key to history; The disadvantages of living in a city.

XVI

THE SHORT STORY

MANY interesting and useful books have been written on the technique of the short story. If the student wish to make a special study of this form of writing there is no better book than *Narrative Technique*, by Thomas H. Uzzell (Harcourt, Brace & Co.). For your general practice in writing short stories, however, the careful observation of the following essentials will bring excellent results.

The major characteristics of the short story as an artistic literary form, are readily seen when they are contrasted with those of the novel. The novel reflects the various moods of intermittent writing; the short story reflects the dominating mood of a single tide of composition. The novel has plot and sub-plots; the short story fails, if it admits the latter. In the novel, plot, character, and setting are developed more or less fully to produce a round picture of life. In the short story this three-fold distribution of interest must be avoided, and one of these three elements takes precedence over the other two in order to produce the specific unity or "effect of totality" at which the short story aims. O. Henry's bent was for the story of plot. In *Markheim*, Stevenson specialized in a story of character, and Poe was most attracted by the story of setting or atmosphere. Scott, on the other hand, in *Quentin*

Durward, developed all three of these elements together. Again, the novel is often prolix, loose, or circuitous in its nature or method, but in the short story a vigorous compression is essential. It admits of no loose ends, and anything which may destroy its effort towards a single impression, is rigorously repressed. In the novel, the details are of varying intensity and significance, but in the short story all details are carefully selected and piled up towards one effect, or climax. It is in this climax that the bomb explodes, and at that one inevitable moment, the short story must stop. This is not true of the novel in which the climax frequently has little significance, and consequently the reader's interest is not lost as the story slides gracefully downward at diminishing speed to its goal.

The short story may be best compared to the lyric, which gives that unity of impression the novel does not seek to attain. In the lyric, "*When icicles hang by the wall*," Shakespeare wished to present a picture of winter. He achieved his purpose by mentioning a number of sights, sounds, feelings, tastes, and conditions common to winter. The picture is a cheerful one because of the poet's merry spirit and zest. This is precisely the method employed in the short story. As soon as the short story writer has a story idea, conception, or plot, he must decide what impression he wishes to create. Taking for granted that an appropriate setting, the indispensable characters, and a suitable action if necessary, have been worked into the plot, there is nothing to do but set to work to create the desired impression in as many ways as possible.

1. *Beginning*. The opening sentence should arouse the attention of the reader, strike the keynote of the story, and suggest the idea or impression with which the whole story is concerned.

2. *Ending*. It should be sudden and relevant and tuned to the highest emotional pitch. The last paragraph, and sometimes the last sentence, marks the end of the suspense, the climax of an ascending series of points or events. Examine the beginnings and the endings of the stories in any modern anthology.

3. *Type*. Short stories may be classified in at least three groups: (a) plot stories, (b) character stories, (c) atmosphere stories.

4. *Plot*. The plot admits of no loose ends, no sub-plots. All parts are linked together in a succession, to express one dominant thought or mood. The motive of the plot may arise from any one of a number of conflicts—physical, intellectual, or spiritual, but all parts must be consistent, and the effect complete. Exclude everything but the essential details, and compress the story to the shortest form consistent with artistic unity, symmetry, and completeness. Do not confuse the reader and impair the climax and the emotional effect by trying to treat more than one thing at a time.

5. *Characters*. The short story writer does not attempt to develop character; he treats merely a phase of it. He chooses a group of three or four contrasting characters whose traits are known and lets the reader see how they react on one another.

6. *Setting*. Except in the atmosphere story, description is limited to a few glimpses of back-

ground. A few suggestive words will do more to create atmosphere or setting for plot or characters than pages of objective description.

7. *Dialogue*. The dialogue in Rudyard Kipling's stories creates atmosphere, portrays character and advances plot simultaneously. Dialogue, however, must be natural and consistent with plot and character. At its best it increases the rapidity of the story and heightens the dramatic effect.

8. *Title*. The title should not be selected until the story is finished, and then it becomes an integral part of the story unit. Its chief object is to catch the interest and arouse curiosity, but it must be closely related to the theme.

9. *Definition*. "A short story is a series of imagined events so patterned as to create a maximum predetermined effect with a minimum of material."

Models

A.

Quality

I knew him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one, in a small by-street—now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction; there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers; and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there? That, too, seemed inconceivable. He

would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim, the patent leather with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding boots with marvelous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all foot-gear. These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother. For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot:

“Isn't it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?”

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard: “Id is an Ardt!”

Himself, he was a little as if made from leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural and one-toned voice; for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were gray-blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed by the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew that it was he, if the words, “I will ask my brudder,” had not been spoken; and that, if they had, it was his elder brother.

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It

would not have seemed becoming to go in there and stretch out one's foot to that blue iron-spectacled glance, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client.

For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of: "Please serve me, and let me go!" but restfully, as one enters a church; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at this interruption.

And I would say: "How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?"

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the shop, and I could continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark: "What a beaudiful biece!" When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again: "When do you wand dem?" And I would answer: "Oh! As soon as you conveniently can." And he would say: "Tomorrow fordnighd?" Or if he were his elder brother: "I will ask my brudder!"

Then I would murmur: "Thank you! Good morning, Mr. Gessler." "Goot morning!" he would reply, still

looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of foot-gear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganized this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous and skillfully sensitive fingers over my toes, arch, and instep, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him: "Mr. Gessler, that last pair of town walking-boots creaked, you know."

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said:

"Id shouldn'd 'ave greaked."

"It did, I'm afraid."

"You god dem wed before dey found demselves?"

"I don't think so," I replied, almost regretfully.

At that he lowered his eyes, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

"Zend dem back!" he said; "I will look at dem."

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them.

"Zome boods," he said slowly, "are bad from birdt. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill."

Once (once only) I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm's. He took my order without showing me any leather,

and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot. At last he said:

"Dose are nod my boods."

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the left boot, endeavoring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable.

"Id 'urds you dere," he said. "Dose big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash!" And then, as if something had given away within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade.

"Dey get id all," he said, "dey get id by advertisement, nod by work. Dey dake it away from us who lofe our boods. Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less—you will see." And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of gray hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened boots. But his face and voice made so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell! They lasted more terribly than ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a boot-maker—making, of course, for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever. And it was longer than usual too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap

of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said:

"Mr. ———, isn'd it?"

"Ah! Mr. Gessler," I stammered, "but your boots are really *too* good, you know! See, these are quite decent still!" And I stretched out to him my foot.

"Yes," he said, "people do nod wand good boods, id seems."

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked: "What have you done to your shop?"

He answered quietly: "Id was too exbensif. Do you wand some boods?"

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left. I had I do not know quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him; or perhaps not so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the feeling: "Oh, well, I can't leave the old boy—so here goes! Perhaps it'll be his elder brother!"

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly.

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

"Well, Mr. Gessler," I said, "how are you?"

He came close, and peered at me.

"I am breddy well," he said slowly, "but my elder brudder is dead."

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but how aged and wan! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured: "Oh! I am sorry!"

"Yes," he answered, "he was a good man, he made a good bood; but he is dead." And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the

cause of death. "He could nod ged over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boods?" And he held up the leather in his hand: "Id's a beaudiful biece."

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

"Oh! Mr. Gessler," I said, sick at heart; "how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair nearly all the time I've been abroad; and they're not half worn out, are they?"

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia leather, and his face seemed to regain steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said:

"Do dey vid you here? I 'ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember."

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

"Do you wand any boods?" he said. "I can make dem quickly; id is a slack dime."

I answered: "Please, please! I want boots all round—every kind!"

"I will make a vresh model. Your food must be bigger." And with utter slowness, he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say:

"Did I dell you my brudder was dead?"

To watch him was painful, so feeble had he grown; I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of

leather, they were the best he had ever made me. And in the mouth of one of the Town walking-boots, I found his bill. The amount was the same as usual, but it gave me quite a shock. He had never before sent it in till quarter day. I flew downstairs, and wrote a cheque, and posted it at once.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the window, were the slim pumps, the patent leathers with cloth tops, the sooty riding boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops—again made into one—was a young man with an English face.

“Mr. Gessler in?” I said.

He gave me a strange, ingratiating look.

“No, sir,” he said, “no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We’ve taken the shop over. You’ve seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people.”

“Yes, yes,” I said; “but Mr. Gessler?”

“Oh!” he answered; “dead.”

“Dead! But I only received these boots from him last Wednesday week.”

“Ah!” he said; “a shockin’ go. Poor old man starved ’imself.”

“Good God!”

“Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see, he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn’t have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won’t wait. He lost everybody. And there he’d sit, goin’ on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never

advertised! Would 'ave the best leather, too, and do it all 'imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect with his ideas?"

"But starvation——!"

That may be a bit flowery, as the sayin' is—but I know myself he was sittin' over his boots day and night, to the very last. You see, I used to watch him. Never gave 'imself time to eat; never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long, I don't know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots."

"Yes," I said, "he made good boots."

And I turned and went out quickly, for I did not want that youth to know that I could hardly see.

From *The Inn of Tranquility* JOHN GALSWORTHY
(By permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.)

B

The Face on the Wall

I still tingle with mortification over an experience at Dabney's last evening, the only satisfaction being that others tingle with me. We were talking of the supernatural—that unprofitable but endlessly alluring theme—and most of us had cited an instance, without, however, producing much effect. Among the strangers to me was a little man with an anxious white face, whom Rudson-Wayte had brought, and he watched each speaker with the closest attention, but said nothing. Then Dabney, wishing to include him in the talk, turned to him and asked if he had no experience to relate, no story that contained an inexplicable element.

He thought a moment. "Well," he said, "not a story in the ordinary sense of the word: nothing, that is, from hearsay, like most of your examples. Truth, I always hold, is not only vaster stranger than fiction, but also vastly more interesting. I could tell you an occurrence which happened to me personally, and which oddly enough completed itself only this afternoon."

We begged him to begin.

"A year or two ago," he said, "I was in rooms in Great Ormond Street—an old house on the Holborn side. The bedroom walls had been distempered by a previous tenant, but the place was damp and great patches of discoloration had broken out. One of these—as indeed often happens—was exactly like a human face; but more faithfully and startlingly like than is customary. Lying in bed in the morning, putting off getting up, I used to watch it and watch it, and gradually I came to think of it as real—as my fellow-lodger, in fact. The odd thing was that while the patches on the walls grew larger and changed their contours, this never did. It remained identically the same.

"While there, I had a very bad attack of influenza, with complications, and all day long I had nothing to do but read or meditate, and it was then that this face began to get a firmer hold of me. It grew more and more real and remarkable. I may say that it dominated my thoughts day and night. There was a curious turn to the nose, and the slant of the forehead was unique. It was, in fact, full of individuality: the face of a man apart, a man in a thousand.

"Well, I got better, but the face still controlled me. I found myself searching the streets for one like it. Somewhere, I was convinced, the real man must exist, and him I must meet. Why, I had no notion: I only knew that he and I were in some way linked by fate. I frequented places where men congregate in large numbers—political meetings, football matches, the railway stations when the suburban trains pour forth their legions on the City in the morning and received them again in the evening. But all in vain. I had never before realized as I then did how many different faces of man there are and how few. For all differ, and yet, classified, they belong to only as many groups as you can count on your hands.

"The search became a mania with me. I neglected

everything else. I stood at busy corners watching the crowd until people thought me crazy, and the police began to know me and be suspicious. Women I never glanced at: men, men, men, all the time."

He passed his hand wearily over his brow. "And then," he continued, "at last I saw him. He was in a taxi driving east along Piccadilly. I turned and ran beside it for a little way and then saw an empty one coming. 'Follow that taxi,' I gasped, and leaped in. The driver managed to keep it in sight and it took us to Charing Cross. I rushed on to the platform and found my man with two ladies and a little girl. They were going to France by the 2.20. I hung about to try and get a word with him, but in vain. Other friends had joined the party, and they moved to the train in a solid body.

"I hastily purchased a ticket to Folkestone, hoping that I should catch him on the boat before it sailed; but at Folkestone he got on board before me with his friends, and they disappeared into a large private saloon, several cabins thrown into one. Evidently he was a man of wealth.

"Again I was foiled; but I determined to cross too, feeling certain that when the voyage had begun he would leave the ladies and come out for a stroll on the deck. I had only just enough for the single fare to Boulogne, but nothing could shake me now. I took up my position opposite the saloon door and waited. After half an hour the door opened and he came out, but with the little girl. My heart beat so that it seemed to shake the boat more than the propeller. There was no mistaking the face—every line was the same. He glanced at me and moved towards the companionway for the upper deck. It was now or never, I felt.

"'Excuse me,' I stammered, 'but do you mind giving me your card? I have a very important reason for wishing to communicate with you.'

"He seemed to be astonished, as indeed well he might; but he complied. With extreme deliberation he took out his case and handed me his card and hurried on with the little girl. It was clear that he thought me a lunatic and considered it wiser to humour me than not.

"Clutching the card I hurried to a deserted corner of the ship and read it. My eyes dimmed; my head swam; for on it were the words: Mr. Ormond Wall, with an address at Pittsburg, U.S.A. I remember no more until I found myself in a hospital at Boulogne. There I lay in a broken condition for some weeks, and only a month ago did I return."

He was silent.

We looked at him and at one another and waited. All the other talk of the evening was nothing compared with the story of the little pale man.

"I went back," he resumed after a moment or so, "to Great Ormond Street and set to work to discover all I could about this American in whose life I had so mysteriously intervened. I wrote to Pittsburg; I wrote to American editors; I cultivated the society of Americans in London; but all that I could find out was that he was a millionaire with English parents who had resided in London. But where? To that question I received no answer.

"And so the time went on until yesterday morning. I had gone to bed more than usually tired and slept till late. When I woke the sun was streaming into the room. As I always do, I looked at once at the wall on which the face is to be seen. I rubbed my eyes and sprang up in alarm. It was only faintly visible. Last night it had been as clear as ever—almost I could hear it speak. And now it was but a ghost of itself.

"I got up dazed and dejected and went out. The early editions of the evening papers were already out, and on the contents bill I saw, 'American Millionaire's Motor Acci-

dent.' You must all of you have seen it. I bought it and read at once what I knew I should read. Mr. Ormand Wall, the Pittsburg millionaire, and party, motoring from Spezzia to Pisa, had come into collision with a wagon and were overturned; Mr. Wall's condition was critical.

"I went back to my room still dazed, and sat on the bed looking with unseeing eyes at the face on the wall. And even as I looked, suddenly it completely disappeared.

"Later I found that Mr. Wall had succumbed to his injuries at what I take to be that very moment."

Again he was silent.

"Most remarkable," we said; "most extraordinary," and so forth, and we meant it too.

"Yes," said the stranger. "There are three extraordinary, three most remarkable things about my story. One is that it should be possible for the discoloration in a lodging-house in London not only to form the features of a gentleman in America, but to have this intimate association with his existence. It will take Science some time to explain that. Another is that that gentleman's name should bear any relation to the spot on which his features were so curiously reproduced by some mysterious agency. Is it not so?"

We agreed with him, and our original discussion on supernatural manifestations set in again with increased excitement, during which the narrator of the amazing experience rose and said good-night. Just as he was at the door, one of the company—I rejoice to think it was Spanton—recalled us to the cause of our excited debate by asking him, before he left what he considered the third extraordinary thing in connection with his deeply interesting story. "You said three things, you know," Spanton reminded him.

"Oh, the third thing," he said, as he opened the door, "I was forgetting that. The third extraordinary thing

about the story is that I made it up about half an hour ago. Good-night, again."

After coming to our senses we looked round for Rudson-Wayte, who had brought this snake to bite our bosoms, but he too had disappeared.

From *London Lavender*

E. V. LUCAS

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Methuen & Co., Ltd.)

C

Crossed Eyes and Wires

A battle was raging on Main Street, Ponoka, Alberta. It was not less violent because it was invisible. It was a war of smells. From the "Savoy Fish and Chip Palace, H. Perkins, Prop." issued cohorts of pungent, oily smells, while, from "Olympia Sweets, Nick Kanelakos," charged a host of more insidious and more elusive smells of synthetic vanilla, strawberry and chocolate. All these smells struggled and surged in the stifling heat that rose from the wooden sidewalk.

Out into this welter of battle from the Olympia stepped Jimmie Murray, stock-tender for the Bow River ranch. Jimmie was past middle-age, short, tubby, bow-legged and almost incredibly cross-eyed. He had come to town for the first time in three months with a bunch of prime steers, had superintended their embarkation, and now felt free to enjoy himself for a while. His ideas of pleasure were primitive but innocent. Red-eye, poker, and crap, this unholy trinity held no lure for Jimmie's simple soul. His dream of heaven was to eat ice-cream and candy all day long.

Just at the moment that Mr. Murray emerged from the Olympia, the door of the Savoy opened and out came William Ewart Gladstone McGill. Someone has said that the outstanding trait of an Oxford man is "a serene consciousness of effortless superiority", and, if this is true,

then, Mr. McGill was an Oxford man. He was very long and very lean; he moved languidly, in his eyes a far-away look. He owned no country or nativelyland: he was a citizen of the world, a drifter, a hobo in fact, but an intelligent hobo who had, after much thought, decided that work was senseless and undignified, that transportation should never be paid for, and that food should, whenever possible, be obtained by soliciting "handouts". To-day he had offered the "Prop." of the Savoy a sporting proposition: he was to pay double or nothing for fish and chips according to the flip of a coin. He won and Mr. Perkins, being a good sport, came across with the meal.

As McGill emerged from his banquet, a stylishly, if loudly dressed girl walked along the opposite side of Main Street. To Jimmie Murray, she was a vision of loveliness so compelling that he had to turn his head to follow her progress down the street. The result was a collision between Messrs. Murray and McGill, and, as the former weighed over two hundred pounds to the latter's one hundred and forty, Mr. McGill sat down hastily and angrily.

"Why'n't you look where ye're goin', ye big ham?" he snarled.

This apparently innocent and quite justifiable question produced a strange effect in Jimmie. He was sensitive about his eyes and more than one cow-hand had been given cause to regret uncomplimentary reference to their lack of focus. Purple with rage, he charged the now upright McGill and bore him to the ground. But William Ewart, for all his flimsy build, was no mean opponent. In spite of his languor, he was as nimble as a cat. He slid out of Jimmie's clutch and locked one arm around the enraged cowman's throat, the other under his armpit in a hold which could not be broken. For several minutes they thrashed about on the sidewalk in what bade fair to be a

draw, but just then the police force of Ponoka arrived in the person of Mr. Denis Drapeman. McGill had had experience with policemen, therefore he loosed his hold on Jimmie's wind-pipe and went away from there quickly, leaving the luckless stock-tender a captive in the hands of the law.

The fugitive's next act was peculiar. He had run perhaps a hundred yards when he stopped, looked back at his late enemy and the policeman, then, falling to the sidewalk, he began to contort himself into all sorts of shapes. Now, it happened that Drapeman had always felt that he had been intended for a doctor. He had recently completed a course in first-aid and proudly displayed on his arm the badge of the St. John's Ambulance Corps. Here was a patient! Torn between his sense of duty and his desire to put his medical skill into practice, he dragged the subdued Jimmie to where McGill lay. With a stern warning to the cow-man to "stay put or 'e'd bloomin' well bash 'is 'ead in", he proceeded to minister to the afflicted McGill. What was Jimmie's surprise to catch over the policeman's back, a wink from the sick man and a barely perceptible nod towards the rear elevation of the kneeling law. The stock-man's mind wasn't very nimble, but this time it clicked. He planted the toe of one of his number tens where it would do the most good with the result that the amateur doctor was hurled several yards ahead and landed on his face in the dust of Main Street. Then Murray ran, at good speed considering his build, towards the string of box-cars in the railway yards, closely followed by the miraculously recovered McGill. They plunged around the end of the first string and into the van of the stock-train which Jimmie had helped to load. There they sat tight until the sympathetic trainmen reported the coast clear. Then they made their way to Murray's room in the Palace Hotel.

For several days McGill was Murray's guest. They

found little trouble in dodging the law, and Jimmie, who was in no hurry to tear himself from the delights of the Olympia and the movies, never tired of the tales McGill had to tell of his travels.

One night the cow-man came in late. McGill, on the bed, was reading "Parted at the Altar", and paid no attention to his host's return. For a long time Jimmie sat in silence, then he uttered a profound discovery:

"Some guys sure is skunks."

McGill, after reading a minute or two longer drawled:

"A bird named Darwin found that out long ago, only he said it was apes. How'd you come to make it skunks?"

"I just been down to the lunch-counter at the station," replied Murray. "There's the nicest little biscuit-shooter down there you ever seen. And I'll say a man done her dirt. Was goin' to marry her, got all her savin's and then beat it."

Mr. McGill's reply was barely audible but quite unsympathetic.

A couple of days later Jimmie announced to his friend that he and the lady of the lunch-counter were going to Winnipeg that night to be married. He had drawn his money from the bank and had it in a belt. McGill showed little interest in the romance but made some remark to the effect that Jimmie didn't know when he was well off.

After dinner that evening McGill disappeared and Murray went to his room. An hour or so later the wanderer returned to find Jimmie in the last stages of excitement and funk. His new leatherette suitcase was packed and he himself was dressed in Abe Epstein's most expensive version of Broadway's styles. McGill took his usual place on the bed and after a few minutes' silence, drawled:

"Say, darned if I can see how any woman could marry a bird with eyes like yourn."

Such a gross insult from one whom he had befriended

filled the simple-minded Murray, first with amazement, then with rage. With a roar, he hurled himself at the reclining McGill but, when he arrived, the latter was elsewhere. William's tactics were unusual. He snatched up the water-jug and hurled it, but his aim was bad, and it crashed through the window. As he dodged Jimmie he seemed intent on making as much noise as possible for he overturned the washstand, kicked chairs around and shouted "Help" at the top of his voice.

In much less time than it takes to tell this, the proprietor of the Palace arrived, followed by his Swede porter. Not far behind came the police force. Drapeman, recognizing the combatants, hailed this chance of squaring accounts. Before long Jimmie, almost tearful with rage, was secured; McGill offered no resistance at all.

An hour later in the one cell of Ponoka's combined police-station and jail, Murray and McGill sat opposite each other. The former was the picture of utter dejection, the latter was deep in "Parted at the Altar" which he had managed to smuggle in with him. A long sigh escaped from the sorrowing cow-man as he murmured broken-heartedly, "That pore little girl."

McGill closed his book, uncoiled his languid length, spat, and said:

"Say, listen, you big sap. Yer 'pore little girl' is my wife and I can prove it. I went down and had a peek at her. And, take it from me, all them swine that run down the hill in the Bible and drowneded theirselves come to life in her. Beat me up if you like, but I'll bet ye're the tenth sympathetic gent she's gypped since she drove me to ridin' the side-door Pullmans. If I hadn't framed this she'd a had yer roll ten minutes after number four pulled outa this dump."

Student's Theme

Analysis of Short Story

1. What is the germinal idea—that without which the story could not exist?
2. Is it a plot, character, or atmosphere story? Which element predominates?
3. Where is the climax?
4. How is suspense maintained? Is surprise mixed with suspense?
5. What clues are given the reader?
6. What single impression does the story create?
7. By what various events and details has this effect been produced? What are the developing incidents? What are the details of the complication and of the resolution? Are there any minor crises?
8. Does the story begin with a setting, characterization, or a plot incident? How does the beginning catch the reader's interest?
9. If the predominating element is not plot, where does the plot begin? What struggle does it involve?
10. Does the interest lag at any point? If so, why?
11. At what point is the interest at its highest pitch? Are the steps leading to this point in definite order and proportion? Are they varied in nature? Is the story well balanced?
12. Has the principle of compression been applied throughout? Can you find any irrelevant material? Are all the descriptive passages necessary?
13. Are the characters types or individuals? Does each character stand out clearly, distinctly and consistently? Does the author characterize by a full and complete exposition or by a few deft suggestive strokes? By what features or manners would you recognize one of these characters on the street?
14. Does the dialogue advance the plot, make the characters

clearer, or contribute to the setting or atmosphere, i.e. the spirit of the time and place? (The dialogue in some of Rudyard Kipling's stories does all three at once.)

15. Is the dialogue an integrant part of the story?

16. Is the conversation consistent with what you know of the characters and their environment? Do the characters talk like real people? Do they ever give hints and suggestions rather than information? If so, which has the greater effect upon the reader?

17. Is the story natural and probable throughout?

18. Does the author hold himself aloof from the life of his story or does he enter into it in spirit? Does he ever express his personal feelings or opinions? Do you ever feel that his characters are the mouthpieces of his likes and dislikes?

19. Is the title appropriate to the story and alluring to the reader?

20. How many different literary devices are effectively used in the story?

21. As a work of fine art, what are the chief characteristics of the short story?

On Plotting the Short Story

A short story must have a plot of some kind. Plot involves a struggle—a conflict between man and nature, man and society, or man and self. A man may try to solve some mystery, win some goal, or master himself. Regardless of its nature, the struggle must be brought to a probable climax and a logical end. If a story lacks action, more stress should be placed on cause and effect. Something must be made to happen. A more vigorous compression may make the important points or incidents stand out more vividly. A plot may be complete

and yet have no impressionistic effect. If the crisis is feeble, no amount of violent or thunderous words will give it the semblance of vigour. Telling the story is not building the plot, and fine writing will not make up for the lack of dramatic complication or a shrewd character analysis. On the other hand, complexity which is the result of too much complication, brings in its wake not climax, but confusion. Only the story that has the naked simplicity of the Gospel parables, can win and hold the reader's interest. Before you begin to write, therefore, it is necessary to plot the action of your story. It should be clear and complete, and end in a single dramatic climax.

Plotting a story is a mechanical process, easy to perform, but essential to success. Less important, but more difficult, is the writing of the story. A great many persons can find good short story ideas in the daily newspaper; they can invent imaginary complications, build original plots, and explain why men do this or that, but they cannot write a short story. We are again face to face with the subject of style, the personal quality which gives a distinct and unmistakable flavour of individuality to good writing. Style alone will not produce a story, neither will plot. Although what you have to tell, is of greater importance than how you tell it, it is the life, charm, and grace of your style that creates and holds the interest. Through the style, is expressed the writer's subtle response to the central facts of his story. The pathos and the humour which give unity and symmetry to the story, come from the writer's emotions. To the same source may be traced

the peculiar diction, phrasing, imagery and atmosphere of a story. Proof of this is found in the fact that every good short story has an effect on the reader's emotions.

If you cannot find a short story idea or situation in the field of your own reading or experience, read the following list of topics and titles for suggestions.

EXERCISE

I. For any three of the following topics

(a) Select a situation;

(b) Choose a group of characters and name their distinguishing features and characteristics;

(c) Build plots, arranging the incidents for suspense and climax;

(d) Write the opening paragraphs:

A favourite has no friend; A tragedy of childhood; A night in the open; Chloroformed; A close shave; The bewitching hat; Slander refuted; A week beyond the grave; A curious advertisement; Stung by a bee; Necessity knows no law; The perfect ventriloquist; Pride and its downfall; Sleep walkers; Cast adrift; The eyes of the octopus; A breach of etiquette; The "cub" reporter meets his match; A misunderstood character revealed in its true light.

2. Write a short story based on one of the topics given above, or suggested by one of the following:

A lone guest; Deceptive appearances; The road ahead; A lively corpse; The turning point; An inquisitive listener; Solving the mystery; Keeping his word; Fooling everybody; Strange clues; A good imitation; Out of his element; Haunted; Knowing too much; A strange confederate; Bought on "spec"; At bay; The benevolent tyrant.

3. Write a short story describing further adventures of one of the following:

- (a) The cow that jumped over the moon.
- (b) Tom Sawyer.
- (c) Rip Van Winkle.
- (d) Sam Weller.
- (e) Nick Bottom.
- (f) Malvolio.
- (g) Micawber.
- (h) Falstaff.

BOOKS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY READING

| | | |
|---|--------------|----------------------|
| <i>Creative Youth</i> | Mearns | Doubleday, Doran |
| <i>Exercises in Criticism</i> | Shillan | Bell (Clarke, Irwin) |
| <i>About English Poetry</i> | Bradby | Oxford |
| <i>Verse Writing</i> | Carruth | Macmillan |
| <i>Lessons in Verse Craft</i> | Ford | Daniel |
| <i>The Appeal of Poetry</i> | French | McClelland & Stewart |
| <i>Poetry and the Renaissance of Wonder</i> | Watts-Dunton | Jenkins |

XVI

ON THE WRITING OF VERSE

The line by law, not like the fool,
But like the bard, who freely sings
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,
And finds in them not bonds, but wings.

COVENTRY PATMORE

THIS stanza was written about poets; the thought expressed in it, applies in part to writers of prose. Prose-writing is a kind of poetry, and there is no better way to achieve a clear and sensitive prose style than by trying to write verse. Under the restraint imposed by the laws of prosody, a writer increases his skill in the selection and the use of words. He becomes more sensitive of their sound values, their suggestive qualities, and the shades of meaning they can cast. Obligated to shape his thought to the austere architecture of a verse-form, a writer submits to a discipline that stimulates his inventive powers, strengthens his imagination and exercises his aesthetic faculties. By trying to induce a distinct emotional response in his reader, he himself becomes more sensitive. His feelings grow finer, more resilient and more rhythmic. Furthermore, a knowledge of some of the finest qualities of style can be acquired more thoroughly and quickly by the writing of verse than by the writing of prose. The effect of verse writing

upon prose style in general, tends to make it at once more pliant, vigorous and personal. The prose writer at his best is a kind of poet. When inspired he, like the poet, can take off for a star.

There are other reasons for the practice of this delicate art. Anyone who has tried to write a sonnet, knows that such an exercise is the shortest route to an appreciation of a poet's meaning and art. It is also the quickest way to discover the nature and importance of the three essential qualities found in good literature, namely sincerity, rhythm and imaginativeness. By imaginativeness, or suggestiveness, is meant that quality which keeps Shakespeare a perpetual delight—his power to make a word or a phrase, a magic casement opening on a fairyland of meaning.

The following transcription of three lines from W. H. Davies' poem, *The Pool*, illustrates in a single passage the three worst faults conceivable in a piece of literature:

Somewhere thereabouts you will find me before dark
Beside that pool black and deep on the top of which
Frolic a group of duck-like shadows and lights.

With this concoction, compare the corresponding passage from the original poem:

There I'll be found before the coming night—
Beside that dark, deep pool on whose calm breast
Sleep a young family of pools of light.

At once it is clear that the first passage lacks rhythm and imaginativeness. In fact, it is not even good prose, because it is insincere. "Top," "frolic," and "duck-like" are vague, freakish, dishonest and

obscure, when compared with "calm breast", "sleep," and "young family"; and what a wealth of suggestion is contained in these beautiful words!

Another method by which to throw into relief the defects of false, unimaginative and irregular verse, is illustrated by the following example. A stanza from a less familiar modern poem, is surrounded by three faulty transcriptions of its material content.

I.

Home, home from the horizon far and bright
Dear downy wings come sweeping;
Here scores of thoughts of the day come at night
To cheer me while I am sleeping.

II.

Home, home from the horizon far and clear
Hither the soft wings sweep;
Flocks of the memories of the day draw near
The dovecote doors of sleep.

III.

Homeward from yonder far horizon so clear
Downy little wings sweep;
All the things that happen to me in the daytime I hold dear
As the pigeons the dovecote they keep.

IV.

Homeward from the horizon far and bright
Hither the darling wings sweep;
Flocks of sugar-sweet thoughts of the day come at night
To the roost where the pigeons sleep.

1. Which is the original stanza by Alice Meynell?
2. In which stanza have the poetic and suggestive phrases been replaced by unimaginative ones?

3. Which stanza expresses the largest amount of false sentiment?
4. In which stanza is the rhythm almost completely lost?

To rhythm, verse owes most of its music. One is aware of this fact when he reads poetry aloud, but the reader needs to know little about the nature of rhythm in order to appreciate its effect. The writer, on the other hand, must know the nature of the simplest metres, or feet, before he can compose a stanza. To teach his son, Derwent, their characteristic differences, Coleridge wrote the following stanza

Metrical Feet

/ ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
Trochee | trips from | long to | short:

˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
From long | to long | in sol | emn sort

— / — / — / — /
Slow Spon | dee stalks; | strong foot; | yet ill able

/ ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘
Ever to | come up with | Dactyl tri | syllable.

˘ / ˘ / ˘ / ˘ /
Iam | bics march | from short | to long:— .

˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ / ˘ ˘ /
With a leap | and a bound | the swift An | apests throng.

With the exception of a few substitutions of other feet for variety, a poet employs one type of foot throughout a single poem. If the verse of a

line of poetry has two feet, it is called a dimetre line; if three, a trimetre; if four, a tetrametre; if five, a pentametre; and if six, a hexametre or Alexandrine. Hence the first line of the stanza quoted above is called a trochaic tetrametre.

It would be futile to demand that trochaic metre be used to convey one kind of subject, and iambic metre another. Rhythm and poetic thought are born together, and if the latter be genuine, the former will be natural and inseparable from the thought. In choosing a rhythm, a writer depends upon his own good taste. The trochaic metre of Longfellow's *The Psalm of Life*

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
trips too rapidly and lightly for the burden it
carries, and hence the poem lacks force and conviction. It does not ring true; but the iambic metre of

The stag at eve had drunk his fill
is well suited to the swift and easy narrative of Scott's long poem. In

This is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the
hemlocks

dactylic metre is well adapted to the theme of *Evangeline*. To produce a slow, martial, stately effect in the dirge

He is gone on the mountain,
Scott uses an anapestic metre. Morris substitutes anapests in

Up the sweep of the bridge they dashed together,

to produce the sound and sight images of waves of attacking cavalry. The spondaic foot is used only as a substitution in other metres to produce special effects, as may be seen at the beginning and end of

Down rained the buds of the dear spring weather.

There are many reasons why the amateur should choose sonnet and lyric forms for his verse. Sonnets and lyrics are not only short, but highly personal. They represent the two extremes best suited to the practice of the amateur. The sonnet is rigid in form, and the lyric is as plastic and free as the spontaneity of the writer's thought. The following sonnet is a good example of the use of this form of verse as employed by a young Canadian poet:

The Mulleins

Here are the mulleins, steadfast at their posts;
A lost battalion, sere and grim and tall,
They hold the line where ran the old stone wall
Between the meadows. On its rampart coasts
Once beat the waves of timothy, the hosts
Of busbied clover. Time has felled them all
Save the lank mulleins standing sentinel
Above the snowdrifts. These are Summer's ghosts.

Rigid they rise where oft the bobolink
Swung the sweet censer of his ecstasy,
Or, hovering, swayed their dizzy spikes around.

Like them I shiver with the wind; and think
Of bobolinks that nested in the hay
And how June's passion slumbers underground.

ROBERT WILLIAM CUMBERLAND

(By kind permission of the author.)

In its standard form, the sonnet has the following characteristics. Fourteen iambic pentametre lines are divided at the end of the eighth line into an octave (the first eight lines) and a sestet (the last six). The octave is subdivided into two quatrains, or groups of four lines, and the sestet, into two tercets, or groups of three lines. In the octave the subject is treated objectively, and in the sestet, subjectively, *i.e.*, in the last six lines, the poet reflects upon what he has described or stated in the first eight. The eighth line should bring the thought in the octave to a significant close. The sonnet confines itself to one thought, or feeling, and this should be treated throughout in a relevant and rhythmic progression, increasing in interest and feeling toward an end which is both impressive and unaffected.

The rhyme scheme of the octave is *a b b a, a b b a*, and of the sextet *c d e, c d e*. The rhymes should be varied and contrasted in sound, as they are in *The Mulleins*, to avoid assonance, which reduces the musical effect, as when rhymes for a word like *posts*, appear beside rhymes for a word like *lost*. Furthermore, the rhyme should not seem forced or hint at any obscurity of thought. Poetry in any form does not omit or include any word merely for the sake of metre or rhyme.

After you have made a study of *The Mulleins*, try to write a sonnet. The following outlines may provide you with poetic material, or at least with suggestions on how to treat your own subjects.

I. A railway engineer, who has been driving a fast express all night through storm and fog and past misty

lights, suddenly breaks out of the hills at dawn upon a sunlit valley, where the roofs and towers of a great city shine and sparkle in the new day. Contrast his feeling of relief at dawn with his earlier fears. It is easy to build around the engineer a variety of contrasts and associations.

II. Another poem might be written to show the contrast between the far-flung limits of Canada and her future greatness and possible influence among the nations of the world.

III. The stone-hookers of early days lie rotting in marshes today. The constructions, they carried stone to build, still remain in use. This will afford poetical material for anyone with romantic feeling.

IV. Deep among the trees stand the remains of a pioneer's log cabin. Across the road we see a new red-brick house. This contrast lends itself to sonnet form. Who has not seen a log cabin grinning, or showing its teeth, through a barrier of tree trunks? And what a grotesque effect is produced by a door ajar and windows askew.

V. In the octave, describe an Indian standing on a mountain praying to the Great Spirit. In the sestet, present his successor mining and smelting and shattering the divine grandeur and peace which filled the Indian with awe. Make a reflection upon this contrast.

VI. Birds and flowers also provide suitable material for sonnets and lyrics, as do the hopes and despairs of men, if one has the power to distil it.

The criticism may be raised that poetry is not the result of inoculation, but the product of inspiration. The subjects outlined above are intended for those writers who cannot discover material for themselves. For the writing of lyrics, the following subjects may be suggestive: On night birds; A lion in a zoo; The vagabond; On finishing the last examination; On

paddling a canoe; On an ancient landmark; On the arrival or departure of a fast express; My best pal—my dog; Churchyard fancies; These I have loved.

Lyrics are written in so many different forms that rules cannot be laid down for them. Before trying to write a lyric, the writer should study a number of models. The lyric which follows is described by one critic as "the most beautiful Canadian love lyric". It was written by John Killick Bathurst, a young Welsh school teacher who came to Canada near the end of the last century. During the hot summer of 1895, he worked as a clerk and prolonged his hours by employment as a manual labourer. He hoped by this double burden the more quickly to raise money to bring his sadly missed wife and children from England to join him. He died before his hope was realized. "Both under the pain and the inspiration of a great love, he composed the following poem."

Love's Pilgrim

Far from thy shrine,
With sterile plains of weary days between,
Hope whispers ever from the void, unseen,
Thou still art mine!
When 'mid the stress of life, with theeward face,
I make my vows toward thy dwelling place.

At radiant morn,
As the new day first slants into mine eyes,
Steal thoughts of that glad dawning of surprise
When love was born:
And in that place where night and morning meet
I cast my life, a love-gift, at thy feet.

Beats the fierce noon
Of sorrow on my head, while skies as brass
Roof all the path my daily feet must pass,

Peace cometh soon:

Prone on the sands of absence, lo I kiss
Thy hands in thought, and find an oasis.

Cometh the night—

I will my carpet of remembrance spread
Till dreary space and absence all are sped

Far from my sight,
And down the corridors of silence deep
Thy white hand beckons me to thee, and sleep.

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